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LIFE OF MIDHAT PASHA

ALI HAYDAR MIDHAT

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Midhat Pasha.

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THE LIFE OF
MIDHAT PASHA

A RECORD OF HIS SERVICES, POLITICAL REFORMS, BANISHMENT, AND JUDICIAL MURDER

DERIVED FROM PRIVATE DOCUMENTS AND REMINISCENCES

BY HIS SON ALI HAYDAR MIDHAT BEY

WITH PORTRAITS

LONDON
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET, W.
1903

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PREFACE

As the Son of Midhat Pasha I was for fifteen years compelled to reside as an exile in Smyrna, but finding the physical and moral sufferings to which I was there subjected greater than I could endure, I succeeded in quitting the territories of the Sultan, and came to take up my residence in this hospitable land, and among this great and free people.

In the following pages I have endeavoured to carry out a duty which has long been incumbent on me, by letting the public, and especially the English public, know the true story of my father's career, and of his death.

The record is based mainly on documents and notes left by him. In obedience to requests from high quarters I abstain from publishing certain documents and correspondence which, bearing as they do on international affairs, might be calculated to cause embarrassment and do harm.

It is possible that some of my father's papers which I have now printed, and which were written in Turkish, may have lost some of their original brightness in the process of translation, but at least, most scrupu-

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lous care has been taken to give the sense of them accurately.

There can be no doubt that at the present time Turkey is suffering from a Reign Terror, and is in a state of anarchy. I hope that the narrative contained in these pages may afford some evidence of the methods by which this condition of affairs has been produced.

My readers will learn how the Sovereign of the Ottoman Empire, in order to carry out his own system of Government, has suppressed every effort for reform, and has removed those men, who by their force of character, by their uprightness, and by their popularity seemed capable of thwarting his designs, and amending the condition of the country and of the people.

I wish to state here that I have a profound respect for the Imperial Throne, and it is this consideration alone, I repeat it, and the honour of my country, which makes me regard it as a duty to humanity to expose the nefarious system of Sultan Abdul Hamid.

In conclusion, I would beg to offer my thanks to the Proprietors of the *Times* newspaper for giving me permission to reprint the excellent report of my father's trial which appeared in their columns.

ALI HAYDAR MIDHAT.

EASTBOURNE, *August* 6, 1903.

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

EARLY HISTORY OF THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

PAGE

Christians in Turkey—Turkish treatment of Subject Races—Corruptions of the Ottoman System—Persistent policy of Russia—Panslavic Committees—The Palace and the Porte—Growth of Autocracy—The Janissaries—Revolt of Mehemet Ali—Reforms of Abdul Medjid—The Czar Nicholas—Origins of the Crimean War—The Crimean War—Attitude of France—Attitude of Austria . . 1-31

CHAPTER II

MIDHAT'S EARLY YEARS

Midhat in the Balkan Provinces—Governorship of Nish, etc.—Widdin and Silistria—Midhat's Success in Danube Provinces—Intrigues of General Ignatieff—Insurrection stirred up—Organisation of local Militia—Appointed Vali of Bagdad—Fighting and Reforms—Finance and Engineering Work—Bussora—Koweit, the Nedjed—The Conquest of Nedjed—Defeat of Abdul Kerim—Aali Pasha—Extravagance of Abdul Aziz—Midhat as Grand Vizier 32-66

CHAPTER III

DEPOSITION AND DEATH OF ABDUL AZIZ

Troubles in Herzegovina—Riots at Salonica—Outbreak in Bulgaria—Meeting at Reichstadt—The Andrassy Memorandum—The Sultan opposes Reform—Deposition of Abdul Aziz—Preparations for the *Coup d'État*—Sultan Murad—Death of Abdul Aziz—Breakdown of Sultan Murad Damad Mahmoud's Conspiracy—Prince Hamid—Deposition of Murad 67-99

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CHAPTER IV

ABDUL HAMID SULTAN

PAGE

Abdul Hamid II.—The Imperial Household—The Speech from the Throne—Nominal Reforms—Midhat's Difficulties—Nominal and Real Reforms—The New Constitution—Sovereign Rights 100-115

CHAPTER V

SECOND GRAND VIZIERATE OF MIDHAT PASHA

Opposition Intrigues—"Midhat's Constitution"—Intrigues against Midhat—Zia Bey—The Press—Promulgation of the Constitution—Rescript of Abdul Hamid—Favourable Reception of the Constitution 116-131

CHAPTER VI

THE CONFERENCE AND MIDHAT'S EXILE

Conference at Constantinople—General Ignatieff's Conduct—The New Constitution and the Powers—Galib Pasha and the Finances—Mixed Schools—Protest of Midhat—Midhat Exiled—The Sultan's Precautions—Prince Gortchakoff and General Ignatieff—Russian Declaration—Prince Gortchakoff's Circular 132-154

CHAPTER VII

MIDHAT PASHA IN EUROPE

The Sultan's Speech—Russia Declares War—Midhat in Naples—Midhat's Efforts for Peace—Midhat's Recall by the Sultan—Midhat and Kiamil Bey 155-171

CHAPTER VIII

THE RETURN OF MIDHAT PASHA TO TURKEY

Midhat in Crete—Appointed Governor of Syria . . . 172-175

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CHAPTER IX

MIDHAT PASHA, GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF SYRIA

PAGE

The Sultan Opposes Reforms—Cause of Midhat's Resignation—Condition of Syria—The Druses and the Arabs—The Turbulent Druses—Troops to be sent—The Druses—Resignation of Midhat—The Palace and Judicial Reforms—Midhat and Syria 176-195

CHAPTER X

MIDHAT, GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF SMYRNA

Abdul Aziz' Death—The *Terdjumani Hakikat*—Attack on Midhat—Attitude of the French Consul—Midhat's Arrest 196-206

CHAPTER XI

THE TRIAL OF MIDHAT PASHA

Mustapha the Wrestler—The Case for the Defence—Midhat's Defence—A Parody of Justice—The Public Prosecutor—Before the Court of Appeal—Grand Council—The British Parliament—Questions in Parliament—Mr M'Coan—Mr Gladstone—Lord Stratheden and Campbell—England's Intervention 207-233

CHAPTER XII

EXILE OF MIDHAT PASHA

Midhat in Prison—Attempt to Poison Midhat—Arrest of Shereef Abdul Mutalib—Haïroullah Effendi . . . 234-241

CHAPTER XIII

DETAILS OF THE ASSASSINATION OF MIDHAT PASHA, ACCORDING TO INFORMATION DERIVED FROM HAÏROULLAH EFFENDI

Return of Bekir—Midhat and Bekir—Tampering with Food—Attempts to Poison—Preparations for the Murder—The Murder 242-256

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APPENDIX A

THE NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE BERLIN NOTE AND THE CONFERENCE OF CONSTANTINOPLE

PAGE

Negotiations following the Berlin Note—The Conference at Reichstadt—Servian Diplomacy and Defeat—England Proposes Terms—An Ultimatum to the Porte—Disagreement among the Powers 257-270

APPENDIX B

THE INSURRECTION OF HERZEGOVINA AND BOSNIA AND THE BERLIN NOTE

Herzegovina and Bosnia—Lord Derby and Austria—Intentional Bad Faith—Austrian Diplomacy—The Berlin Note—Austria and Russia—Mr Monson's Despatch . 271-284

APPENDIX C

BULGARIAN ATROCITIES

A Bulgarian Insurrection—Revolutionary Agents at Work—Fictions and Ingenious Credulity 285-292

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MIDHAT PASHA

CHAPTER I

EARLY HISTORY OF THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

IT would be inconsistent with the general plan of this book to give more than a very summary and cursory view of the early history of the Ottoman Empire before the time of Midhat Pasha; but it will not be inappropriate, and may possibly aid in elucidating the history of his times, and throw light on his work of reform, if the main features of that history be here drawn in outline, and some of the phases traced through which the Turkish Empire passed during the four centuries that elapsed between the taking of Constantinople by Mehemet II. and the Crimean War.

It has sometimes been objected to Midhat Pasha and the Constitution of 1876, by those who have given a very superficial study to the subject, or who have a political object in depreciating all reforms in Turkey, that, however admirable the Constitution may have been in itself, it was prematurely and precipitately introduced, and ill adapted to the peculiar conditions of the Ottoman people. One of the aims of this book is to show that, so far from this being the case, the reforms associated with the name of Midhat Pasha were conceived in the

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very spirit of the early Ottoman Constitution, and were expressly suggested by the wants and requirements of that country as revealed in the course of its administration to a succession of statesmen, who found themselves in practice hampered at every turn, and their best efforts continually thwarted by the absence of the very checks and safeguards which Midhat's Constitution endeavoured to impose. Within half a century of the taking of Constantinople (1454) by Mehemet II., Bulgaria, Servia, Moldavia, Wallachia and large portions of Hungary and Poland were added to the Ottoman dominions. It was (as all impartial writers now admit) as much by virtue of the simplicity and purity of its creed, and the force of propagandism that it in consequence possessed, as by the force of arms, that Islam made such astounding progress in those days. If extensive provinces and important kingdoms yielded with slight resistance before the advance of the Ottoman armies, and if large masses of the conquered populations adopted the religion of the conquerors, it was because their moral conquest was effected before their political subjection was attempted.

The reputation, too, for justice and moderation enjoyed by the early Ottoman sovereigns was no insignificant factor in conciliating the goodwill and blunting the opposition of nations, who might under different conditions have opposed a more serious resistance to the advance of the Ottoman armies. Sixty years before the appearance of the Turks before Constantinople, the people of the ancient kingdoms of Roumania were called upon to choose between the Magyars—who, in conformity with their traditional policy, desired to Magyarise Wallachia—and the Ottoman sovereign, who offered the inhabitants the enjoyment of their religious and civil liberty. They did not hesitate between the two, and Mircea signed, with the Sultan Bayazid, the first capitulation of

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Roumania (1393). Twenty-six years later, in 1419, the Servian ruler Brankovich, pressed by John Hunyadi, ruler of Hungary, to join him in an alliance against the Turks, invited him to state the policy in respect to religion that he proposed to adopt, in the event of victory attending their joint military efforts. Hunyadi answered without periphrasis, that the Servians would have to adopt the Catholic worship. Brankovich then addressed a similar question to Mehemet I. "I propose," replied the latter, "to build a church next to every mosque, and proclaim that every one shall be at liberty to follow his own worship and religion." Brankovich rejected the Hungarian alliance, and declared himself the vassal of the Turkish Sultan.

But, it has been contended, the condition of the Christian populations (*Raias*) of the countries actually conquered by Islam was very different; and there is even a widespread popular belief that these populations were forced to "opt" (to use a modern phrase) between the religion of the conquerors and death, the poll-tax (*kharadj*) being the money composition imposed in commutation of the death sentence. Nothing can be more erroneous. The *kharadj* was the tax imposed on the Christian population in lieu of the military service and other similar duties from which they were exempted, disabilities generally regarded by them as privileges, and in consequence of which they have increased and multiplied and become rich and prosperous in the land. An entirely false interpretation has been given to a passage in the Koran, which was even quoted by the Austrian plenipotentiaries at the Conference of Niemirow, in 1737, in support of the "Death or Koran" theory here referred to. The true answer, which indeed is obvious from the context, was given by the Ottoman negotiators on this occasion, viz., that the text quoted applied only to

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idolaters and not to the "people of the Book." Anyone who knows anything of the religion of Mahomet is aware of the important distinction recognised therein between the "people of the Book" (*kitabi*) and idolaters (*medjous*), and knows that whereas little mercy, it is true, was shown to the latter, the former were included in the Dar-ul-Islam (the house of Islam), where they formed an integral portion of the empire, and that the true Mahomedan was taught, with respect to the latter, that "their substance is as our substance, their eyes as our eyes, and their souls as our souls." The fable, too, that the murder of a Christian by a Mahomedan was considered by the Cheri (sacred law) as a trivial offence, and was visited by a lighter punishment than the same crime committed on the person of a Mussulman, is disposed of by the *Fetva* delivered by the Mufti (Supreme Judge of the Sacred Law), and quoted by Cantimer[1] in answer to the question, "What should be the penalty if eleven Mussulmans murdered one Christian?" "If the Mussulmans were one thousand and one in number, instead of only eleven, they should all be put to death."

So far indeed is it from being historically true that the conquered Christian populations were forced by the sword to adopt the religion of Mahomet, that when Selim I. desired, for reasons of what he considered long-sighted policy, so to convert the Christians of the Balkans, he was stopped short in the attempt by a *Fetva* of the Sheik-ul-Islam, Zenbilli Ali Effendi, who pronounced such a proceeding to be contrary to the Koran and the Cheri (sacred law), and the attempt was accordingly abandoned.

It may be remarked, in passing, that history does not relate that Cromwell was ever diverted from a policy similar to that from which Selim was deflected, or hampered in his enactment of the penal laws in Ireland

[1] "History of the Ottoman Empire," vol. ii. p. 356.

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by any such scruples or protests on the part of the ecclesiastical authorities of his day. However that may be, the policy of the Ottoman sovereigns with reference to the conquered Raias was the exact opposite to that popularly supposed. Nor was the policy actually adopted the result of any idiosyncracy or peculiar generosity on their part. It was in strict obedience to the injunctions of the Prophet, and in conformity with the policy pursued by himself in the "letters patent," accorded to the Christians (*nassara*) on the 4th day of Moharem of the year II of the Hegira. It was in fact the fixed and settled policy of the Mussulman political system.

In proof of this position some European authorities, by no means particularly inclined to the Ottoman cause, Montesquieu for example, may be quoted. This author bears testimony to the happy change effected in the condition of the Greek population of the empire after the occupation of their capital by the Turks: "The people," he says, "in place of that continued series of vexations which the subtle avarice of the Byzantine Emperors had devised, were now subjected to a simple tribute, easily paid and lightly borne, happy in having to submit to even a barbarous nation (*sic*) rather than to a corrupt government under which they suffered all the inconveniences of a fictitious liberty with all the horrors of a real servitude."

The reports of the Venetian ambassadors, and the narratives of travellers in the sixteenth century, like La Motraye, offer concurrent testimony to the tolerance and moderation of this "barbarous nation." "The other (*i.e.* the Christian) subjects of the Empire," says La Motraye, "enjoy all the liberty of conscience that they can desire. They go to the churches and pilgrimages and practise all the rights of their religion, without fear or molestation. The same thing applies to their commerce

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and temporal affairs. They have no dread of being deprived of the fruits of their labours, which they enjoy without let or hindrance."[1]

Compare with this condition of the Greek Raias of the Ottoman Empire that, for instance, of the Greek population of Chio under Genoese domination, as described by Genoese writers themselves, and quoted by Mr Fustel de Coulanges, where the unfortunate population, in addition to daily exactions and injustices, were compelled four times a year, at Christmas, Easter, Whitsunday, and the Feast of the Circumcision, to attend a ceremony, best described as "a feast of humiliation," at which their clergy and chief citizens were summoned to the palace of the Podesta, where a herald, mounted on a stand, with a wand in his hand, read four prayers for the Pope, the Emperor, the Republic of Genoa, and the family of the Justiniani, and obliged the assembled Chiotes, at the end of each prayer, to answer in responsive and quasi-enthusiastic acclamations; these poor Chiotes being thus compelled to acclaim and pray for the Pope—their greatest enemy—the Emperor they knew nothing about, the Republic that had subjected them, and the family of the Justiniani whom they detested, representing as it did the "Maona" (a financial company) that ruthlessly pillaged them.

Take again the case of the Candiotes under the domination of the Venetians, in which the Greek population of the island did not hesitate to conspire with the Turkish besiegers in order to deliver their capital into their hands, and thus free themselves from the oppression of the Italian Republic.[2]

Even the Greeks of the Morea complained bitterly of the religious persecution of the Venetians, whereas

[1] "La Motraye," La Haye, 1727, vol. i. pp. 383, 462.

[2] See the "Relation du Baile Garzoni," of 1581.

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said they, "the Turks allowed us all the liberty we required."[1]

These quotations, which could be multiplied *ad infinitum*, will probably suffice. It was indeed the universal cry of all the Christian population in the East, from the middle of the fifteenth century to the beginning of the eighteenth—"A thousand times rather the Turks than the Latins."

That corruptions gradually grew up in the land of the Osmanli; that perversions of the law crept into its practice, and that prejudices, engendered by ignorance, created abuses which in earlier days were sternly repressed, it is not intended here to deny. Indeed it is the contention of this book that such perversions, the causes of which it will be its purpose to trace, did spring up, as rank weeds, in the Ottoman system; but what is strenuously asserted, and what will, it is hoped, be proved, is that they formed no part or parcel of the original Ottoman Constitution, but were, on the contrary, excrescences in that system, violations of its spirit and essence; and further, that the efforts of the reforming party in the nation, from the days of Selim III. to the accession of Abdul Hamid II., through an apostolic succession of patriots and statesmen—including the Keuprulu Mehemets, the Reshids, the Aalis, the Fuads and the Midhats—were directed to the end of restoring the spirit of that Constitution, with such adaptation of it to the requirements of the day as the experience, science and political conditions of the world required.

Mehemet II., from the moment he sheathed his sword on victory being assured, manifested his determination that the lives and properties of the conquered populations should be respected, and, in order to give weight

[1] See Gervinus' "Insurrection et Régéneration de la Grèce," vol. i. p. 16.

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to his orders to that effect, took immediate measures to offer a conspicuous example of respect for the religion of his new subjects by his conduct as its hierarchical chief. He summoned the Greek Patriarch (*Roum milleti patriki*) to a solemn Divan, stepped down from his throne, and breaking through all established usage, advanced ten steps to meet him, took him by the hand, and seated him next to himself in the place of honour, delivering into his hands, as a symbol of power, a golden sceptre, which to this day is carried in processions on occasions of great ceremonies, investing him with unlimited authority over all Orthodox schools, monasteries and churches, and with judicial and administrative functions over all his co-religionists.

Such a delegation of power was the nearest approach to the establishment of an *imperium in imperio* as is afforded in history, with, let it be added, all the weakness that attaches to such a *régime*, as was subsequently too clearly proved by the pernicious use made of these privileges by a foreign Power, in founding on them a claim to interfere in the internal affairs of the empire, and in using them as a lever to overthrow it.

But wise or unwise, such at any rate was the policy adopted by the Sultans of Turkey towards their Christian subjects, and the legend of conversion by the sword must be relegated, with so many similar fables with respect to Turkey, to the mythology of history.

From the foundation of the empire, and under the ægis of its government, the Hellenisation of the Raias, under the authority of the Patriarch of the Phanar, proceeded apace throughout the country. So effectually indeed was this taking place, that the very name of Slav, or Bulgarian, implying as it did an inferior social status, was gradually falling into disuse, and the prouder appellation of "Roum," or Greek, substituted for it.

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It is probable that another half-century of this process would have blotted out the very name of Slav, had not a new Power appeared on the world's stage, introducing a new factor in the Eastern problem, and profoundly modifying its conditions. This was the rise of Russia as a world Power, under the rule of that extraordinary man of genius, Peter I. After finally breaking the power of Sweden at the great battle of Pultava, and after adding Livonia, Esthonia, Ingria, Finland, and Lithuania to his already vast dominions, and founding a capital with a maritime outlet on the Northern Seas, he turned his ambition to the sunny lands of the South, which the legend of the marriage of a Byzantine princess with a Russian *Kneze* had already annexed in imagination to the Empire of Moscovy.

This is the place to refer to an historical event which has more than a passing interest, as it may be said to be the source and origin of the undeviating policy of Russia in her dealings with Turkey. At the historical interview between Peter the Great and Cantimir, Voivode of Moldavia, the latter initiated the Russian Czar into the secret of the Eastern problem, and explained to him the profit that might be derived from taking adroit advantage of the privileges of self-government enjoyed by the Christians in the East, and from the steady pursuit of a policy exploiting this autonomy to the best advantage.

The lesson here learnt was never forgotten, and the political strategy here determined on became henceforth the very keystone of Russia's policy in regard to Turkey.

Whether the famous will of Peter the Great be apocryphal or not, as historically speaking it probably is, there is no doubt that it expresses, with prophetic instinct at any rate, the great lines of policy that have ever since been pursued with reference to Turkey by all Peter's successors.

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Two distinct phases have marked the manner of Russia's dealings with the Christians of the East, although those dealings have been undeviating in their aims and in general plan of attack on the Ottoman Empire.

The first phase was marked by a close alliance with a Greek Patriarch and his Metropolitans, and a general identification of views between the Russian and Greek propaganda.

The Greek liturgy and the Greek priesthood were accepted without a question, whilst portraits of the Czar, with the superscription "Emperor of the Greco-Russians," were freely circulated by the Greek clergy among their flocks. Colonel Repnin's plot, in 1837, took place in connivance with the Greek Patriarch, and a few years later Marshal Munich was received by the peasants of Moldavia with the Greek archbishop and his clergy marching at their head. The convents and monasteries in Moldavia, Wallachia, Servia, and Montenegro were used as *dépôts* for arms, and monks were not the least audacious of the leaders of the revolutionists. Piccolo Stefano in Servia and Montenegro, Papazoglou in Greece, and Gamana in Wallachia, put themselves at the head of armed bands, that were joined by others from across the frontier. This alliance continued until Russia, having by her victories and prestige acquired the position of the recognised leader of the anti-Turkish movement, was strong enough to dispense with the Greek alliance and to champion the cause of pure Slavism undiluted with Hellenism.

The second phase of Russian policy in the Slav provinces was marked by the feverish activity of the Panslavic Committees of Bucharest, Kischnoff, Moscow and Kieff, the cynical intrigues of the Russian ambassadors at Constantinople, and the fanatical articles of Katkoff in the *Moscow Gazette*, the aim of all which was

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to give a national direction to the Slavic movement in the Turkish provinces. The nationalisation of the religion of the people, the substitution of the authority of national Exarchs as heads of their churches, in the place of the Greek Patriarch, and of a native clergy educated in Russia in the place of that nominated at the Phanar, were the measures called for, and successively adopted, to stimulate a movement that now embraced all Slav dependencies of Turkey in its action. The pretext of protecting and securing the privileges of the Christian communities in the Turkish Empire was finally dropped, and the liberation of the oppressed nationalities of the South-West of Europe became the watchword of the new propaganda.

All the machinery of the heavily subsidised Panslavic Committee was set in motion; band after band was raised and sent across the frontier; rebellion was openly preached, and the ignorant peasantry were deluded, by arguments which they did not understand, to complain of grievances which they did not feel.

The answer to the question of how such an encroaching and cynically pursued policy, violating as it did every principle of international law and comity in its dealings with a neighbouring nation, was possible—in a century, too, that was roused to indignation against a not dissimilar but entirely unofficial raid in South Africa—must be sought in the unfortunate condition and weakness of the Ottoman Empire that exposed it, almost defenceless, to the attacks of its powerful neighbour, and dispensed the latter from even the decencies of international intercourse as practised among civilised nations.

This weakness in its turn was the result, as this work is specially intended to show, of corruptions and perversions that had crept into an originally admirable Constitution, and had produced a paralysis of all its important functions, placing its nation almost as much

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at the mercy of its enemies as had the *Liberum Veto* the fair land of Poland.

The successive steps of these innovations must now be rapidly traced. When the conquering energies of the new empire were exhausted, and its victorious armies checked under the walls of Vienna by Sobieski and his Poles, and the maritime power of its fleet broken by Don John of Austria's victory at Lepanto, a new phase was entered upon in which internal reorganisation took the place of external conquest.

The latter half of the sixteenth century was devoted to attempts to organise the empire on quasi-feudal principles. It was divided into *timars* and *zeamets* (fiefs), represented by the great feudatories, the Derebeys. This was the first serious innovation, involving a perversion of the cardinal principle of the Ottoman Constitution, which was in spirit and essence purely democratic; and when the counter-revolution took place, and the Sultans determined to get rid of the Derebeys, so as to establish their own exclusive power, the mischief was already done, for the old principle of democracy, as understood by the companions of Othman, was by this time seriously impaired by the long disuse of its ancient rights and functions; so that this counter-revolution, instead of restoring the old order of things, only redounded to the exclusive profit of autocracy. Nothing but the Porte (that is the Government), and the traditional authority it exercised, now stood in the way of the complete absolutism of the Sultan, and, owing to the veneration of the Ottoman people for their sovereigns—a veneration founded partly on religious, partly on secular, sentiments, and due in no small measure to the exceptional merits of their early rulers—the Sultans entered on the struggle for absolutism equipped with superior advantages. Having no fear of popular encroachments before their eyes,

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or of popular passion directed against their persons, they could devote their entire thoughts and energies to the task of dominating the Porte and monopolising power in the State.

The struggle of these two contending forces, the Palace and the Porte, continued for a long time, with alternate preponderance on either side, a strong Sultan and a weak vizier inclining the scales towards autocracy, whilst a strong vizier with a weak or luxurious Sultan, redressed the balance to the other side. The Keuprulu Mehemets, Reshids, Aalis and Fuads left the impress of their minds on the Ottoman policy and administration, whilst a host of so-called Grand Viziers—whom it would be superfluous to name singly, inasmuch as their collective name is legion—were the mere registers of the will, and instruments of the caprices, of their masters. The Sultan Abdul Medjid counted with Reshid Pasha, and Abdul Aziz with Aali and Fuad, as long as they were alive; but it was reserved for his successor, after he had suppressed a Constitution that he had sworn to observe as the very condition of his mounting to the throne, to brush all checks and counterpoises of every kind aside, and to set up a pure, unmixed despotism, based on caprice and corruption alone. Such a system of government had been hitherto unknown to the Ottoman Constitution, was emphatically denounced by the prophets, was contrary to the express provisions of the Sacred Law, was repudiated by Mehemet II. and all the early Sultans as well as Caliphs of Islam, and ran counter to all the traditions of the Ottoman people.

Simultaneously with the beginning of this fatal perversion and this gradual absorption by the Sultans of all power in the State, another change was taking place, closely connected with it, and aggravating all its worst effects.

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The high character of the early Sultans of Turkey—to which all contemporary authorities, Christian and Mahomedan alike, bear testimony—had, as has been said, profoundly affected the Ottoman character. Their fervid loyalty to their rulers sprang in no small measure from the lessons inculcated by their early history and their most cherished traditions. Now, up to the reign of Selim II., the Sultan of Turkey received a very superior education. They were not merely patrons of learning, but often themselves men of letters of no mean order. Mehemet II., the conqueror of Constantinople, was a distinguished poet; Selim I., a poet and a litterateur, prided himself, above all his prerogatives, on being the patron of men of letters and of science. This pursuit of science and learning was, moreover, in strict conformity with the spirit and letter of the Koran. "Seek science, even if it be in China"; "The wise and learned are the heirs of the Prophet," are not isolated texts in a book teeming with passages of a similar kind. The early Caliphs, too, of Bagdad and Cordova, the Abdur Rahmans, Solimans, and Haroun el Reshid, were living proofs and typical examples of enlightened Mahomedan teaching.

But from the middle of the seventeenth century a change came over the spirit of the Sultanate in Turkey. Instead of identifying themselves with the life of their people and priding themselves on being the light that guided them, the Sultans now retired into the harems and gave themselves up to a life of ease and indulgence utterly foreign to the habits and principles of their great predecessors. They surrendered the reins of government into the hands of their Kizlar-Agassi (chiefs of eunuchs), or Bostandji Bashi, and as one favourite succeeded another, or one palace clique displaced another, so vizier followed vizier in rapid and bewildering succes-

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sion. All the corrupt and turbulent elements in the State were now unchained, justice was sacrificed to private interests, the muscles of the State were relaxed, and its most vital interests neglected and ignored. To such a pass had things come in this "State of Denmark," that when at last a reforming Sultan arose in the person of Selim III., he had to pay with his life his reforming ardour, and leave to his successor, Mahmoud II., a task almost beyond human strength to accomplish. The reigns of the next three Sultans after Selim are the history of honest, though intermittent, struggles against the fatal legacies of the past two centuries, and of many abortive attempts to grapple with the evils that a departure from the primitive Constitution of the Empire had entailed on it, aggravated as these evils were by revolutions organised across its borders, and the systematic intrigues and almost uninterrupted hostility of its nearest neighbours.

But in following the evolution of the struggle between autocracy and the Ottoman people, and endeavouring to trace its origin, we have been anticipating the chronological order of events. We must now return to the narrative of the military movement of the eighteenth century, from the time that Peter the Great turned the energies of his diplomacy and his armies in the direction of the Ottoman provinces.

The first collision between the armed forces of Turkey and Russia ended unfavourably for the latter. By the treaty of Falksen (1711), Russia was compelled to restore Azov, that she had seized, and to undertake to abstain from meddling in the affairs of Poland. But for the treachery of Baltadji Mehemet Pasha, it is probable that this first campaign would have ended still more disastrously for Russian arms, and possibly the final partition of Poland would have been averted. That unhappy country found, at this crisis of her history, in the Sultan of Turkey

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her sole champion and defender among the sovereigns of Europe, and her name figured for the last time in history in a public instrument in which her rights were safeguarded by a Mahomedan sovereign against the deadly machinations of her Christian neighbour.

It was certainly unfortunate for the Ottoman Empire—and it may possibly not have been altogether fortunate for the rest of Europe—that the rise of the power of Russia should have been synchronous with the period of the greatest weakness of Turkey. Russia's principal attacks on the integrity and independence of Turkey were skilfully timed so as to coincide with the moment when that empire was in the throes of internal revolution, and could offer the least resistance to an external foe. At the time of Mahmoud II.'s accession to the throne, after the murder of Selim III., the accumulation of difficulties and dangers that beset the empire were such that it seemed as if nothing short of a miracle could prevent its complete destruction. It required at any rate some very potent principles of internal strength and cohesion to resist the centrifugal forces in full activity at that crisis. Servia was in open revolt under Michel Obrenowitz, Egypt was in the hands of the able and ambitious Mehemet Ali, Arabia was in the effervescence of a Wahabee rising, the Pasha of Janina had raised the standard of revolt, and the Governor of Widdin, the famous Pasvan Oglou, had proclaimed his independence, and—most serious danger of all—the insurrection of Greece, supported by a consensus of enthusiasm in Europe, threatened the integrity of the empire; all this, too, at the very moment when the military forces of the empire were undergoing the complete reorganisation which Selim had begun, and Mahmoud was resolved to carry out. This revolution, for it was nothing less, consisted in the abolition of

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the ancient corps of Janissaries and the substitution for it of a regular force (the *Nizam*) drilled and organised on the European model.

The Janissaries from being a redoubtable *corps d'élite* recruited from Christian youths, who embraced the military as a life-long profession, and were imbued with a military spirit which proved its worth on the hard-fought fields of Mohacs, Nicopolis and Cossovo, had become through successive relaxings of the bonds of discipline and the ruin of its military *esprit de corps*, nothing but an unruly Pretorian Guard, a greater terror to the sovereign and to peaceful citizens than to the enemies of the empire. The gratuities that they were accustomed to receive on the accession of a new Sultan, and the licensed pillagings that invariably ensued on these occasions, were irresistible temptations to them to render this event as frequent as possible, and they consequently deposed sovereigns and proclaimed new ones almost at their will. The privileges, moreover, that they wrested from the terrified sovereigns, especially after the death of Soliman I.—such as the right to marry, to desert barrack life (their *odjaks*), and to pursue trades and industries—completely changed and deteriorated their martial character, and from the victorious soldiery that they were in the days of Ilderim Bayazid they became nothing but a turbulent militia. At last the scandal caused by their depredations and violence became intolerable, and their disbandment was loudly demanded by public opinion in all classes of the population. Selim III. determined to suppress them, and, as a necessary preliminary, commenced the reorganisation of the naval and military forces of the empire by inviting French engineers to build ships of war, and French officers to drill and discipline a new army on European principles. Unfortunately Bonaparte's expedi-

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tion to Egypt, and the declaration of war that ensued between France and Turkey, recalled these military instructors before the work of instruction and reorganisation was half completed. It was these threatened Janissaries who, on their return to Constantinople from an expedition to Syria, willingly lent themselves as instruments of the ambition of the Sultan's brother, Mustafa, and who deposed and finally murdered Selim. But the deposed sovereign, in his retirement and before his death, found time and opportunity thoroughly to imbue with his reforming enthusiasm his cousin Mahmoud, and he, on ascending the throne, determined, as the only means of saving the empire from ruin, and in spite of the menacing attitude of the new Czar Nicholas of Russia—who inaugurated his accession by sending an Ultimatum to Constantinople—to carry out unflinchingly the whole programme of reforms conceived by Selim. At a Grand Council (*Divan*) assembled in 1826, a unanimous vote was passed in favour of the total suppression of the Janissaries, and shortly afterwards, the decree being resisted by the mutinous soldiery, they were surrounded and overpowered, and in the massacre that ensued this famous Pretorian Guard finally disappeared.

The organisation, however, of the regular forces (*Nizam*), which were to take their place, being only half complete, it was just at the moment when the military organisation of the empire was undergoing a radical transformation that the new Sultan was called upon to face all the complications of internal revolution and foreign wars that confronted him on his accession. Mahmoud, however, set resolutely about the task, and a certain measure of success attended his first efforts. The Pashas of Widdin and Janina were successively reduced to subjection, and by the help of the Pasha of Egypt

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who had not yet thrown off his allegiance, the Morea was reconquered by the troops of Ibrahim Pasha, and Greece would undoubtedly have been restored to her position as the Western horn of the Ottoman Crescent but for the forcible interference of Europe and the military expedition of Marshal Maison.

By a protocol, signed at St Petersburg, on 4th April 1826, Greece was declared an autonomous and vassal State; but after the rejection by the Sultan of the collective mediation of the four Great Powers (5th February 1827), Austria, France, Great Britain and Russia (Protocol of London), and the destruction by the allied forces, without the formality of a declaration of war, of the Turkish fleet at Navarino (1827), immediately followed by a declaration of war on the part of Russia, and the campaigns of Diebitch in Europe, and Paskiewitz in Asia Minor, terminating in the disastrous Treaty of Adrianople (14th September 1829), Mahmoud had no choice but to consent in the following year (1830) to the creation of Greece into an independent kingdom, an arrangement confirmed by the Treaty of London on the 13th July 1841.

The still more serious revolt of Mehemet Ali—imperilling as it did not only the integrity of the empire, but the solidarity of Islam—immediately followed. On the Ottoman sovereign refusing to concede the government of Syria to Mehemet Ali, in return for his services in the campaign against Greece, the latter, picking a quarrel with the governor of the coveted province, quickly invaded Syria, and, defeating the Ottoman troops in a great battle at Konia, compelled the Sultan to agree to a truce (credited with the name of peace), whilst both sides prepared for an early resumption of hostilities. When this took place the Egyptian troops were again successful in a decisive battle at Nezib (24th June 1839), which

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placed the whole of Syria, up to the walls of Acre, in the possession of the victorious Pasha of Egypt.

Russia was, of course, too alert in following the traditional policy in regard to Turkey not to profit by these distractions, and it was at this mortal crisis of the Ottoman Empire that she stepped in and secured the secret clauses of the Treaty of Unkiar Iskelessi (8th July 1833), by which she bound Turkey to an offensive and defensive alliance that was to last for eight years, and to exclude all flags but her own from passing through the Bosphorus.

These events, however, at last brought England and Austria into the field, and an English fleet under Napier appeared before Alexandria, and an English force under Sydney Smith before Acre (Saint Jean d'Acre). Mehemet Ali, who was now deserted by France, was thus obliged to sign the Convention of Alexandria, by which Egypt was restored to the suzerainty of the Sultan, with, however, the viceroyalty of the country made hereditary in his family. By the Treaty of London (13th July 1841), this arrangement became part of the public law of Europe, and at the same time the clauses of the Treaty of Unkiar Iskelessi were revised, and the neutrality of the Straits was solemnly reaffirmed.

Six days after the disastrous battle of Nezib (June 25, 1839), the Sultan Mahmoud died, and was succeeded by his son, Abdul Medjid. The youthful sovereign, who was only seventeen years old, in spite of the misfortunes that had befallen his country, or, perhaps, rather on account of them, resolved to persevere steadily in the course of reform initiated by his two predecessors. Fortunately he possessed in Reshid Pasha a great Minister, who shared and seconded, and perhaps prompted, the reforming ardour of his master; and on the 3rd November 1839 an Imperial Rescript, the famous Hatti Humayoun of

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Gulhané, proclaimed the following reforms for the whole empire:—

I. A guarantee of life and honour to all Ottoman subjects, without distinction.

II. A regulation of taxation so as to put an end to arbitrary exactions.

III. The equality of all before the law.

IV. Public instruction to be secularised.

V. The slave trade to be abolished.

VI. The decentralisation of the provincial governments, and a separation of civil, military, and fiscal functions.

This great charter was certainly not intended by its author to be a dead letter. It was, on the contrary, an earnest attempt to grapple with the new conditions of the empire, and to restore the spirit of its ancient Constitution, whilst reconciling it to the new requirements of the day.

This double purpose was clearly manifested in every line of the new decree, the preamble of which ran as follows:—

"Every one knows that when the Empire was first founded, its laws and precepts, which were of a high standard, were scrupulously obeyed. Therefore the Empire grew in strength and grandeur, and all its subjects, without distinction, attained to a high degree of ease and prosperity. For the last five hundred years a succession of accidents and divers causes have brought it about that men have ceased to conform to the sacred code of laws and regulations that flow from it, and therefore the force and prosperity of former days have been converted into weakness and poverty—for a nation always loses all stability when it ceases to observe its laws. These considerations have been ceaselessly present to our mind, and since the day of our accession to the throne the thoughts of the common weal, the amelioration of the condition of the provinces, and the lessening of the burdens of the people, have been the subjects of our

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constant preoccupation. Moreover, if the geographical position of the Empire; the fertility of its soil; the aptitude and intelligence of its inhabitants; be considered, they will lead to the conviction that if a ruler applies himself diligently to discover the efficacious means to effect necessary reforms, the results that we hope to attain, with the help of the Almighty, may be achieved in the course of a few short years. Therefore, full of trust in the help of the Almighty, and leaning on the intercession of our Prophet, we consider it right and proper to set about, by the help of new institutions, procuring for the provinces of our Empire the blessings of a sound administration."

Reshid Pasha, by order of the Sultan, set himself earnestly to the task of translating the general principles enunciated in the Hatti Humayoun, with special laws and regulations that should reduce them to practice, and four years after its promulgation at Gulhané, the *Tanzimat*, or regulations for the organisation of all the branches of administration, was published throughout the empire. Under the four general heads:—

I. The Government proper (*Mejalice devleti aliie*);
II. The Administration (*Zaptié ve mulkie memourlari*);
III. Justice and Public Instruction (*Ylmié*);
IV. The Army and Navy (*Seifiie*),

it gave the most elaborate directions for the organisation of each branch of the public service. Considering the condition of confusion into which the administration of the country had fallen in the course of ages, and the absence of any guiding principle in it, the *Tanzimat* must be considered one of the most remarkable efforts of administrative organisation ever displayed in any country, and a monument of the genius of Reshid Pasha. It is not altogether without reason that he has been called the "Richelieu of Turkey."

But it does not suffice to decree great changes; it is in the endeavour to reduce them to practice that the chief

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difficulty arises. And no great wonder if in a country like Turkey, where vested interests had grown around the old order of things; where conservative prejudices, as in every country in the world, obstruct the path of reform; where trained civil servants did not exist but had to be created, that the execution of these important and all-embracing reforms should not have taken place by decree as by a magician's wand, but required time and patience for their realisation. Events, too, were taking place in Europe which were destined to change the aspect of things and divert the minds of statesmen from internal organisation to the necessities of defending the existence of the national independence. The revolutionary movement of 1848-1849 in Europe afforded a little respite to a country outside the sphere of this movement, and it was just at this disturbed period of the rest of Europe that Turkey enjoyed the greatest peace and made the greatest progress in the work of reorganisation. But scarcely had the revolutionary effervescence calmed down in Europe, and the fears connected with it been laid to rest, when the Emperor Nicholas—who had finally suppressed the Magyar insurrection and restored Hungary to the House of Hapsburg—turned his attention once more to Turkey, and resolved on decisive action. To suppose that the progress in organisation that was being effected in that country was not entirely unconnected with this determination would be only to deny that the arguments and reasons of State put forward by Pozzo di Borgo, in 1828, were operative in the mind of the Emperor Nicholas twenty years later:

"When the Imperial Cabinet examines the question as to whether the moment had not arrived to take up arms against the Porte, some doubt might possibly have existed as to the urgency of such a measure in the minds of those who had not sufficiently meditated on the effects

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of the sanguinary reform (destruction of Janissaries) that the Ottoman ruler had just executed with such terrible force. Now, however, the experience that we have just had ought to enlist the sympathy of all in favour of the course that we have adopted. The Emperor has put the new Turkish system to the proof, and His Majesty has discovered in it a commencement of moral and physical organisation which it never possessed before. If the Sultan has been enabled to oppose to us a more spirited and regular resistance than before, whilst scarcely able to put together the elements of his new plan of reform and amelioration, how much the more formidable should we have found him if he had had the time to give it more solidity."[1]

However that may be, hardly had the Russian troops withdrawn from Hungary than the Emperor Nicholas, addressing Sir Hamilton Seymour, the English Ambassador at St Petersburg, dwelt on the moribund condition of the Turkish Empire, and proposed to him its partition. Crete and Egypt were to be the spoils of England, whereas Servia, Montenegro, Wallachia, Moldavia, and Bulgaria were to fall to the share of Russia. This offer was duly reported to the Cabinet of St James, and categorically declined by it. The state of Europe at the time was not unfavourable to the Czar's designs. Austria was bound to Russia by gratitude for important services rendered, and only Metternich suspected her to be then capable of "stupendous ingratitude." Prussia was united to the Czar by ties of near kindred, and by her traditional indifference to the affairs of the East. France having fallen into the hands of a sovereign capable of reviving Napoleonic traditions, was as much an object of suspicion to all the crowned heads of Europe as by his *coup d'état* he was to liberal opinion throughout the world. The last thing that seemed likely, or even possible, was a coalition between Napoleonic France and

[1] Pozzo di Borgo to Count Nesselrode, November 1828.

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the England of Lord Aberdeen. The omens seemed favourable for striking a decisive blow.

A quarrel in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem, between Greek and Latin monks, afforded the desired pretext. After some diplomatic haggling between the Porte and France, in which the latter first put forward and then withdrew claims which would have afforded a precedent and pretext for Russian pretensions, Prince Mentchikoff suddenly appeared, with much bluster, at Constantinople, as the bearer of an Ultimatum demanding the assent of the Porte, within the space of five days, to a Russian protectorate over all the Orthodox subjects of the Sultan in his dominions. Europe, startled by the brusqueness of this action, as well as the serious import of the demand, endeavoured immediately to interpose her mediation to avert a crisis. Sir Strafford de Redcliffe and Mr de la Cour, who happened to be absent from Constantinople on the arrival of Prince Mentchikoff, returned precipitately to their posts, and, seconded by the Austrian Ambassador, Prince Leiningen, spared no effort that ingenuity could devise to give effect to their conciliatory instructions. But as no compromise could possibly be found between the pretensions put forward in the Ultimatum and what the Porte was willing to concede, Prince Mentchikoff had the escutcheon removed from the Russian Embassy at Pera, and with his whole suite quitted Constantinople.

Three weeks after this (31st May 1853), Count Nesselrode despatched another Ultimatum reiterating the same demands, and giving the Porte eight days within which to execute them. The only answer vouchsafed to this document was the proclamation by the Sultan, on the 6th June, of a new Hatti Sherif confirming the rights and privileges of all the Christian subjects of the empire. The combined French and English fleets, at the same

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time, received orders to sail to Besika Bay, and although war was not formally declared, the Emperor Nicholas gave orders for his armies to cross the Pruth and to seize the Danubian principalities as a "material guarantee" for compliance with his demands.

It was not till 28th September that war was formally declared between Russia and Turkey, and that Omar Pasha received orders to summon the Russian Commander to evacuate the principalities. The interval between this period and the date of Prince Mentchikoff's mission had been employed by a lively diplomatic correspondence between Lord Clarendon and Mr Drouyn de Lluys, on one side, and Prince Gortchakoff on the other, relative to the interpretation of the seventh clause of the Treaty of Kainardje, on which Russia based her claims to interfere with the Christian subjects of the Ottoman Empire. The destruction of a Turkish squadron by a superior Russian fleet in the harbour of Sinope at last terminated this diplomatic interlude, and brought the armed forces of England and France into the field. On the 27th December the allied fleets entered the Black Sea, and an expeditionary force was sent to Varna and the Dobrutcha.

Here is the place to note the influence exercised on the course of events by the action of Austria.

It was one of the principal aims of English and French diplomacy at this period to secure the co-operation of the Middle Empire. By her geographical position and the revived force of her empire, as well as by the magnitude of her interests in the Eastern Question, she seemed called upon to exercise a preponderant influence on the issue of the coming struggle. It was even generally taken for granted that, could her active co-operation be secured, such powerful pressure could be brought to bear on Russia as would secure the objects of the Western nations

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without actual recourse to arms; and, at any rate, that if Russia were still to persist in her policy of encroachment, the military forces at the command of the coalition would be so overwhelming as to compel her rapidly to retreat from the position she had taken up. Austria was generally considered to hold the key of the situation.

There was no lack of political motive on the part of Austria to bring her into line with Western Powers. The free navigation of the Danube, the arrest of the dangerous Panslavic propaganda of Russia, the curbing of limitless ambition of her colossal neighbour, were undoubtedly objects of State policy of the first magnitude. On the other hand, strong dynastic sympathies, and the obligations of gratitude for important services recently rendered, weighed heavily in the opposite scales. The result of these conflicting motives was a line of conduct which, whilst diplomatically supporting the contentions of the allied Cabinets, seriously hampered their military resolutions.

Had Austria not placed her veto on the march of the allied armies into Poland, that country would have become the battle-field between the forces of the East and West, and as far as human forecast can determine, the whole face of Europe would have been changed, the Eastern Question would have been settled for ever, and the nightmare of Cossack preponderance lifted once for all from the shoulders of Western civilisation.

Instead of prosecuting the war on the continent of Europe, an expedition to the Crimea was resolved upon, and a French and English army landed at Eupatoria, and after a victorious advance across the Alma, and making a flank march to the south side of Sevastopol, they invested that portion of the great arsenal of Sevastopol which after two years' siege and the taking of the fortress of Malakoff, at last surrendered to the allied army.

On the 25th February 1856, a congress was assembled

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at Paris, and on the 30th March the Treaty of Paris was signed by the plenipotentiaries of Russia, Turkey, England, France, Prussia and Italy, by which Turkey was admitted into the full benefits of international law, and into the Concert of Europe, and all right of interference in her internal affairs was expressly disclaimed and repudiated by all the Signatories. Russia and Turkey were expressly debarred from maintaining any armed forces in the Black Sea, and a small strip of Bessarabia was ceded by Russia to the Danubian principalities.

This was followed by the proclamation of a new Hatti Cherif on the part of the Sultan, which closed this particular chapter of the history of Europe.

Before concluding this short epitome of the history of the Ottoman Empire, and proceeding with the narrative of the life of Midhat Pasha, the incidents of whose career begin at this point to be interwoven with the general history of his country, it will be useful to cast a glance at the state of Europe and the general trend of events and alliances that succeeded the settlement of 1856.

The death of the Sultan, Abdul Medjid (1861), and the character of his successor were the chief factors, as will shortly be seen, that influenced the direct destinies of Turkey. Unfortunately, in a country where absolutism had gradually become the established form of government, this was, and could only be, the determining element in the problem of government.

Russia, defeated but not humiliated, or even seriously crippled in a war which had, however, strained her resources, and absorbed by the great measure of the emancipation of her serfs, which inaugurated and rendered illustrious the reign of the successor of Nicholas, was, to employ the now classic phrase of Prince Gortchakoff, "collecting herself" (*La Russie se recueille*). This did not, however, prevent her giving a free hand, and even

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officious support, to the Panslavic Committees of Moscow and of Kieff, that now, through the promptings and under the direction of Katkoff and his school, entered upon a militant career, and the crafty Ignatieff was sent to Constantinople to defend and support the machinations of these committees, and to play with consummate astuteness on the weaknesses and vices of a sovereign who possessed none of the qualities of his three predecessors, but was remarkable only for an inordinate passion for expenditure and a morbid jealousy of his autocratic power. His perfect sanity, moreover, became more and more questionable.

With respect to France, from the first meeting of the plenipotentiaries at Paris, in May 1856, it became evident that a change had come over the spirit of the Court of the Tuileries. The representatives of France no longer showed themselves as irreconcilable to the views of Russia as was the case when Mr Drouyn de Lluys penned his famous despatches two years before, and in the discussions that took place at the Congress, and still more in the various Commissions appointed to settle the details of the articles of peace, the envoys of France were found to be constantly ranged on the side of Russia, whereas the views and contentions of England and Turkey were invariably supported by the representatives of Austria.

This new orientation of French politics, which continued to the time of the Polish insurrection in 1862, was further emphasised by the exceptional pomp and circumstances attending the French mission to St Petersburg, on the occasion of the coronation of the new Czar. The matrimonial and political *rapprochement*, too, between the House of Savoy and the Napoleons, culminating in the war of 1859, was a further cause of estrangement between France and Austria.

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In compensation, however, for the gradual parting of the ways of French and English diplomacy in the East, the Cabinet of Vienna seemed to have reverted frankly to what may be called the normal policy of Austria with reference to Turkey, and the policy of Metternich and Castlereagh was for a time steadily and consistently followed by Buol and Palmerston. This state of things continued until the double election of Prince Couza in the Danubian principalities caused a rift in the alliance.

To Austria everything connected with the free navigation of the Danube and the political status of the provinces bordering on that great artery is, and must ever be, State interests of the first magnitude.

To England, apart from their indirect bearing on the integrity and independence of Turkey, these questions were only matters of sentimental interest founded on academic sympathy with the general principle of nationalities. This sentiment, however, called into activity by the events unrolling themselves in Italy, was particularly strong in England at the time when the question of the principalities presented itself as a practical problem to the statesmen of Europe, and found in the Prime Minister of the day, Mr Gladstone, one of its keenest and most enthusiastic partisans. England completely severed her policy on this occasion from that of Austria. Whether such conduct, with reference to a branch of a much larger problem, was quite consistent with an Eastern policy considered as a whole, and whether such a deviation from the obligation of loyalty to an indispensable ally was or was not responsible for much of what subsequently occurred, is perhaps too delicate a question to be discussed here. Certain, however, is it that the desertion of Austria on this occasion by the ally she counted on in Eastern matters to maintain intact the provisions of the Treaty of Paris, and the instability of English foreign policy

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that it revealed, made a profound impression on the minds of the Austrian Emperor and his counsellors, and justified in their view the revolution that subsequently took place in the Eastern policy of Austria. Placed as the Middle Empire is—between jealous rivals and powerful neighbours, and with enormous and vital interests to safeguard—it is obliged to lean on one system of alliance or another, and what has been called "la politique du Cascole" is, as it were, a necessity of her position, and even a condition of her existence. When the events connected with the Herzegovinian insurrection come to be narrated in these pages, the part taken in them by Austria, and the *rôle* played by her statesmen throughout the long negotiations preceding the Russo-Turkish War and during its continuance, until the final act of the comedy enacted at Berlin, will have to be clearly set forth in detail, for it was Austria that played the chief part in all of them, and that finally secured the chief part in the spoil.

This chapter, which only seeks to point out the particular circumstances that determined a change of policy on Eastern matters on the part of this empire, must be considered rather as an apology for, than an indictment of Austria with respect to Turkey. Moreover, it is the author's aim throughout this work to narrate and explain events according to the lights vouchsafed to him, rather than to accuse any nation of bad faith or unjustifiable aggression with respect to his country. A nation worthy to exist at all must exist by its own strength and vigour, and not by the sufferance of its neighbours; and indeed the only indictment which will be proclaimed in this book will be against the descendants of the Othmans, Orkhans, Solimans, Bayazids and Mahmouds who have turned their backs on the traditions of their faith, and have allowed the muscles of the nation to be relaxed, and its heritage to become the prey of the spoiler.

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CHAPTER II

MIDHAT'S EARLY YEARS

MIDHAT was born at Constantinople in 1822. His father, Hadji Ali Effendi, was a native of Rustchuk, and gave his son the usual education provided by the local schools, until he was of an age to follow him in his different displacements, first to Widdin and Lofdja, and afterwards to Constantinople in 1836. A few years after this he obtained a position in the Secretariat of the Grand Vizier's office, whence he was promoted to superior employment in the provinces. He remained two years at Damascus, and then, after a short interval spent in Constantinople, he proceeded, in 1844, to Konia, as secretary to Sami Bekir Pasha's Council. In 1849 he was nominated to the Presidency of the *Medjlissi-Vala* (Grand Council of State) and promoted to the rank of Sanie, which is the first rank in the Ottoman hierarchy, and in 1851 to that of Mutemaiz, with the functions of First Secretary to the Grand Council.

Soon after this, difficulties in the provinces of Damascus and Aleppo, connected with the Custom House, and with the conduct of the Commander-in-Chief of the Army of Arabia, Kibrissli Mehemet Pasha, necessitated the despatch of a public functionary with full power to inquire into the irregularities, civil and military, which were notorious in those provinces. Midhat was chosen for this important and confidential mission. In the space of six months he settled the question of the Customs in favour of the

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Government, by which the sum in dispute, £T150,000, was restored to the Ottoman Treasury, and a further surplus of £70,000 was secured. He further fixed the responsibility for the insurrection of the Druses on the Commander-in-Chief, Kibrissli Mehemet Pasha, and recommended his recall.

The courage and capacity of which Midhat gave proof in this mission attracted to him the attention of the Grand Vizier of the day, the famous Reshid Pasha, who appointed him to a confidential post in the Superior Council of the State, which he occupied during the successive Grand Vizierates of Reshid, Aali, and Great Rifat, Pashas. This may be considered the initiation of Midhat into political, as distinguished from administrative, life. It was in this post that he assisted, in 1852, at the historical interview between Rifat Pasha, Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Prince Mentchikoff, the special envoy of the Emperor Nicholas, in the negotiations that preceded the Crimean War.

In 1854, Kibrissli Mehemet Pasha, who in consequence of Midhat's report had been dismissed from the command of the Syrian Army Corps, became Grand Vizier. He now charged Midhat with the difficult and delicate mission of pacifying the disturbed provinces of Adrianople and the Balkans, and clearing them of the brigandage that infested them. The organising genius of Midhat proved equal to the task. He suppressed brigandage with a strong hand, and by restoring tranquillity in this district he deprived the neighbouring States of all pretexts for chronic complaints. To prevent the return of trouble he further elaborated a whole plan of reorganisation, which he submitted to the approval of the Government at Constantinople, where Reshid Pasha had again become Grand Vizier. The draft of this plan arrived at the very time that Reshid and Aali Pashas were engaged in

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drawing up regulations for the government of the *Eyalets* (provinces), with a view to their decentralisation. Midhat's plan was accepted, and it was decided that he should be nominated to the governorship of the important province of the Danube (Bulgaria), when suddenly another change of Ministry at Constantinople delayed the execution of the whole plan of reform. In the meantime an appalling earthquake at Broussa had caused terrible damage in that important city and much misery among its inhabitants. Midhat was now despatched thither with a mission to succour sufferers and to help to restore confidence among the terrified inhabitants.

On his return from Broussa he was despatched as special commissioner to inspect the provinces of Widdin and Silistria, which were in open rebellion against the central authorities. Here Midhat, as he had previously done in Syria, made a detailed report, pointing out the faulty administration of the provinces, and fearlessly inculpating the two Valis (governors).

This discharge of a public duty was met by the usual manœuvres of inculpated Pashas. Their friends at the Palace bestirred themselves in their favour, and induced the Sultan to reject the proposals of Midhat, and to send a well-known Ulema at Constantinople, Haireddin Effendi, to the two vilayets in question, to make a further report in verification or contradiction of that of Midhat. To the confusion and disappointment of the friends of the incriminated Valis, Haireddin Effendi made a report in every way confirming the views and recommendations, and emphasizing the accusations of Midhat.

At this time (1858) Reshid Pasha died, and Aali Pasha, his successor, obtained six months' leave of absence for Midhat, to be spent in travelling in Europe, with a view to the study of certain points of European administration with which he desired to make himself acquainted. Paris,

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London, Vienna, and Brussels were successively visited in this short period of time, and much valuable information obtained, both as to the spirit and working of European governments.

Midhat had by this time already acquired a certain reputation as a successful provincial governor and whenever trouble in the empire declared itself, his name recurred as a fit and proper person to be despatched as special envoy or governor to pacify the province in question. Kibrissli Mehemet Pasha had now again become Grand Vizier, and as trouble of a serious kind had for some time been brewing in the vilayet of Nish (Servia), where, in spite of the presence of an imposing force of regular and irregular troops, insecurity of life and property was rampant, and an alarming emigration of the inhabitants was taking place, he nominated Midhat to the Governorship of this importart province (1861).

Midhat resolved to make an attempt to pacify the province without the use of armed force, and to gain the confidence of the Bulgarians by the redress of their just grievances. His first step was to invite the notabilities of the different districts to conferences, to state their complaints, and attentively examine with him the remedies that should be applied. These grievances practically resolved themselves into two: (1) the entire absence of roads and other means of intercommunication, which made it impossible for the inhabitants—exclusively cultivators of the soil—to find markets for their produce; (2) the rampant brigandage that everywhere existed, rendering life and property insecure. These two causes, it was, that induced the emigration into Servia, which was assuming large proportions, where the Bulgarians found among their fellow-Slavs both greater security and more favourable conditions of labour.

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Midhat readily acknowledged the justice and reasonableness of these complaints, and proceeded to strike a bargain with the notables. They were to undertake to use their influence to pacify the country and discourage emigration for two years, and Midhat engaged within this time to carry out the reforms and improvements that were mutually agreed upon between them. Midhat strictly carried out the terms of this agreement. He ordered the troops back to their barracks, commenced the great high road between Nish and Sofia with the byroads connected with it, and by means of military patrols sent out in every direction, brigandage very soon entirely disappeared from the country. Roads were now being laid out in every direction, and bridges constructed over the Morava and other rivers, so as to meet the requirements of an agricultural population, and facilitate the outlet for their produce. An elaborate system of blockhouses all along the Servian frontier put an end to the incursions of armed bands of Servians, which had long fostered and sustained disturbance in the province, and many Bulgarian families who had emigrated into Servia now began to return to their former habitations. Concurrently with these material ameliorations, Midhat occupied himself with the solution of other economical and moral problems that concerned the well-being of the community. The relations between proprietors and tenants of the soil had long been in an unsatisfactory condition. Midhat convoked representatives of both these classes to a conference, and with much pains, and after long discussions, he succeeded in finding a means of reconciliation between their opposing pretensions, to the satisfaction of both parties.

At Prisrend, in that part of the provinces inhabited by the Arnauts, he was confronted with problems of a peculiar nature. Here a vendetta (similar to the Corsican

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vendetta) existed among the unruly mountaineers of Albanian descent. Midhat, faithful to his system of working hand in hand with the inhabitants themselves, convoked an assembly of notables of the district, and with their co-operation, and by their own initiative, instituted a permanent commission to settle money compositions for bloodshed, and by this means he succeeded in suppressing a vendetta that had existed for centuries among this brave but unruly people. He further induced them to give up the practice of carrying arms, and, for the first time in the history of the provinces, to submit to Imperial conscription; he further organised a *gendarmerie*, secured the peaceful collection of taxes, and put an end to all religious persecution; schools, too, were established, and hospitals for members of all religious denominations without distinction. Thus the vilayets of Nish and Prisrend gradually recovered the full enjoyment of tranquillity and peace, and Christians and Mussulmans alike began to enjoy the prospect of returning prosperity.

In the provinces of Widdin and Silistria the problem of pacification was complicated by a factor which rendered the solution far more difficult. Here the continued and systematic interference of Russia by means of her consuls and agents, supported by the Russian ambassador at Constantinople, working hand in hand with the agents of the Slav Committees, who were overrunning the country and preaching the gospel of rebellion, created quite a new set of problems to be dealt with. It was no longer local grievances to be redressed, but a political propagandism to be faced.

Aali and Fuad Pashas, the successors of Reshid Pasha, appreciating the administrative and reforming talents of Midhat, summoned him in 1864 to Constantinople, to consider with them a general organic law for the government of the provinces of the empire (*loi des vilayets*), and

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it was there resolved that the vilayets of Silistria, Widdin, and Nish should be combined into a single government under the name of the "Vilayet of the Danube," and entrusted to Midhat. The Imperial sanction to this appointment and to the organic reforms proposed was obtained (in 1865) in spite of the opposition of the reactionary party in Constantinople, headed by the Sheik-ul-Islam of the day, Saadeddine Effendi, strenuously backed by Sourrouri Effendi Naib, an avowed enemy of the new Vali, whom we shall meet with later on figuring, as a reward for his zeal, and in acknowledgment of his impartiality, as the President of the tribunal that tried and condemned Midhat. But the influence of Fuad Pasha was sufficient to overcome all such opposition, and Midhat forthwith entered upon his new and important functions.

It will be sufficient to give a summary account of the radical reforms introduced by the new Vali in the government of this important province.

The whole vilayet was divided into seven distinct *sandjaks* (districts), the sandjak into *cazas* (cantons), and the cazas into *nahies* (communes), and in each of these centres councils were created for the levying of taxes and local administration of the district.

Forced labour (*corvée*) was abolished; bridges to the number of 1400 were constructed; and 3000 kilometres (circ. 2000 miles) of roads constructed; brigandage was effectually stamped out and a local *gendarmerie* raised, and agricultural banks, with a view of relieving the small farmer from the exactions of the usurer, established. The capital for these purposes was procured by an ingenious system, founded on the cultivation of the public and waste lands, by which not only was relief given to distressed and needy agriculturists, but a local fund was created for important local improvements. Agriculture, the staple industry of the inhabitants, soon began to flourish in consequence

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of these wise and energetic measures, and with agriculture the affiliated industries and commerce of the country. The navigation of the Danube, the great artery of the province, next engaged the attention of the Pasha, and soon two, and then four, vessels, flying the Ottoman flag for the first time, made their appearance on this river. A postal service was likewise started, and through the initiative of the governor a manufactory of carriages established at Rustchuk, which at the end of the very first year paid a dividend of 10 per cent. Charitable institutions too were not neglected, and orphan asylums for Christian and Mahomedan children alike were constructed at Rustchuk and Sofia, and the pupils initiated in trades and industries.

The key of all these reforms, and the cardinal principle of this administration, was to work hand in hand with the local authorities. By their aid the valuation of all property held in the respective districts was carried out equitably and fairly, and taxes founded on this assessment were levied without complaint; and although the salaries of responsible officials, such as the police and judges, were considerably increased, and many vexatious taxes abolished, the new revenue of the province showed a considerable and increasing surplus.

The prosperity of this large province under its new administrator could not fail to attract the attention of the authorities at Constantinople, and Midhat now received the congratulations both of the Sultan and of the Sublime Porte. An Imperial Irade, moreover, enjoined all the governors of the other provinces of the empire to apply in their respective vilayets the same reforms that Midhat had introduced in that of the Danube, a detailed plan and description of which had been forwarded to Constantinople by Rifat Effendi, the secretary of the vilayet (subsequently Grand Vizier).

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So far everything seemed to go well, and a new era of prosperity seemed about to dawn for the provinces of the empire generally. It is worth while for those who really desire to obtain an inside view of the working of Turkish absolutism, and to discern the secret springs that move the Government of Turkey, and make themselves acquainted with the hidden causes that have time after time wrecked the hopes of Turkish reformers, to follow attentively what we are now about to relate, on the authority, be it noted, of one in a position, if any one was, to know the truth and put his fingers on the plague-spot.

Midhat felt that his work would not be complete, nor would the return of material prosperity suffice to attach his province permanently to the Government of the Sultan, unless he applied himself as well to the moral side of the problem and succeeded in counteracting the manœuvres of the enemies of the empire to sow disaffection in the minds of the youth of the province. One of the most effective devices contrived by them with this view was the plan, pursued for many years, of sending large numbers of Bulgarian youths to carry on their studies at the Russian universities of Odessa, Kharkoff, and Kieff, and these, on their return, became the chiefs of the staffs of the active propagandists of Panslavic ideas among the youths of Bulgaria. These missionaries of disaffection constituted one of the most serious dangers to Ottoman sovereignty, and one of the most difficult problems to deal with. Midhat determined to grapple with it, and with this view he determined to establish in the principal centres of the province schools and universities where the Bulgarian youths, Christians and Mussulmans alike, should enjoy all the advantages of a first-class modern education without having to seek it abroad. The incidental advantage of a fusion of Christian and Mussulman elements in the country,

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under the inspiring influence of a common education, at an age when friendships are most easily formed and generous sentiments evoked, did not escape the sagacity of Midhat. The whole project was explained by him in a detailed report to the Sublime Porte, the expenses being provided half by the surplus revenues of the province, and the rest by voluntary subscriptions.

When this project was made known at Constantinople, the person who most readily seized the full import of it was General Ignatieff, the Russian ambassador. It went directly counter to all the most cherished plans and projects of the Panslavic party, of which he was the moving spirit. There was nothing that he did not do to wreck the plan and upset the Pasha. Unfortunately the nature of an absolute government and the character of an Eastern autocrat afforded him ample means of action. The interference of a foreign ambassador in the internal economy of a province of the empire had nothing in it which appeared abnormal or impertinent; such interference was consecrated by long usage and had become chronic and accepted. Ignatieff began by representing to the sovereign that the spirit of the reforms effected by Midhat in his vilayet, especially the institution of local councils (which was of the very essence of the reforms introduced), were in direct opposition to the spirit of absolutism, and that the result would infallibly be that little by little the province itself would become detached from the body of the empire, and would claim its entire independence, as had already happened in the case of Egypt. It is not certain, however, that the ambassador would have gained his point, even with a sovereign so tenacious of his prerogatives as was Abdul Aziz, had not an unfortunate error of typography, eagerly seized on and exploited by Ignatieff, played into the hands of the ambassador. In a passage of the official

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journal of the province, the term "deputies" was inadvertently applied to the members of the chief council of the vilayet. This apparently trivial circumstance, the slip of a typographist, was sufficient to turn the scale in the Sultan's mind and to wreck the project. Abdul Aziz refused his consent to the proposal, on the obviously insincere pretext of the expense connected with it. Thus this crowning act of Midhat's work, the reform which above all others was calculated to attach the Bulgarians to the central government and to destroy a nest of disaffectation in the province, was defeated by a foreign ambassador playing on the ignorant susceptibilities and autocratic instincts of the sovereign of the country. If this were a single and exceptional example of the working of autocracy, it might be passed over in comparative silence, however regrettable it was in this particular instance ; but the whole modern history of Turkey shows that such intervention was nothing less than a system of statecraft whereby autocracy was cunningly worked for the ruin of the country in as certain and deadly a way as was the *Liberum Veto* of the Polish constitution. The spontaneous caprices and whims of an autocrat are the least part of the baneful effects of autocracy ; it is in the shadows that flit behind the throne, stronger than the throne itself, working systematically on the ignorance and fears of the autocrat, with settled purpose and in pursuit of settled plans, that lies, in the East at any rate, the real curse of absolutism.

Simultaneously with this diplomatic action at Constantinople, order was given to the Panslavic Committees established at Bucharest and Kichenew to prepare for action in the field. Midhat's agents had kept him informed of the revival of agitation entertained by the agents of these committees among the Bulgarian peasants, and he lost no time in transmitting this information to the Porte.

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MIDHAT PASHA AND HIS SUITE IN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE PROVINCE OF THE DANUBE.

1. Midhat Pasha.
2. "Inspecteur de la Cour Judiciare."
3. "Juge du Cheri."
4. Adib Effendi, Minister of Customs (1889).
5. Rifat Pasha, Grand Vizier (1897).
6. Raïf Pasha, Minister (1890).

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On the 2nd May, 1867, Midhat received the following telegram from Sistovo:—"Last night numerous armed bands crossed the frontier close to Sistovo, and were immediately joined by other bands who were waiting for them on this side of the frontier, and early this morning they commenced operations by the horrible mutilation of five Mussulman children, aged from eight to twelve, who were tending sheep on the plains."

The object and purpose of these barbarities was obvious: it was to excite reprisals on the part of the Mussulman population, which would afford a pretext to the enemies of the empire to fill Europe with an outcry against Turkish barbarity and fanaticism. The same policy, heralded by the same acts, ruthlessly pursued later on, did produce the desired effect, and Bulgarian atrocities became a proverb and byword in the world; but on this occasion the energy of Midhat and the patience and forbearance of the Mussulman population, defeated the purpose of the conspirators. Midhat, immediately on receiving the above telegram, embarked two companies of regulars on board a steamer and despatched them to Sistovo, whither he accompanied them himself. He found the whole population, Christian and Mussulman, in a state of the greatest excitement, and his first care was to calm the effervescence and to inspire confidence in the energy and resolution of the authorities.

The plan of the insurgents was to push on as rapidly as they could to the Balkans, increasing their forces as they went along by the native levies which had been organised by the committees for this purpose, until they reached the monastery of Kapanbova, where a large *dépôt* of arms had been collected, and which was intended to be the headquarters of the insurrection.

The presence of four battalions of regulars at

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Capriova prevented the execution of this plan, and after suffering several defeats in the field, the bands dispersed in various directions, closely pursued by the troops and the local levies that had joined them. Midhat now instituted a special tribunal, composed of six Mussulmans and six Christian judges, to try the rebel prisoners, and the evidence given by the prisoners themselves, clearly demonstrated that the invading bands had been equipped and sent out by the Slav Committees of Bucharest and Kichenew, and were acting in unison with corresponding committees established throughout the province. By the unanimous vote of this tribunal, sentences of death were passed on the leaders, and penal servitude and minor punishment, according to their status and degree of culpability, on all the rebels taken in arms. By these energetic means the insurrection was effectually stamped out and tranquillity restored to the province.

An outcry, however, was quickly raised in the European Press against the "methods of barbarism" adopted to repress the insurrection, and the Pasha was accused of ultra severity against Christian insurgents and reprehensible leniency towards Mussulman offenders.

So far from this latter accusation having any real foundation, the very composition of the special tribunal appointed to deal with these troubles was a guarantee of its impartiality. Moreover, the following fact will afford an example of the impunity enjoyed by the Mahomedan criminals. In the course of these troubles two dead bodies of Christians were found in a field near Biscara; a judicial investigation was immediately ordered on the spot, and the result was that the evidence pointed to a sergeant of *gendarmerie*, a Mussulman of the name of Mehemet Tchavouch, as having committed the murder. Pressed by questions Mehemet made a full confession, and he was thereupon condemned to death and forthwith executed.

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Midhat now turned his attention to the best means of anticipating and guarding against similar raids and insurrections in the future. He knew well that the central revolutionary committees at Bucharest and Kichenew would not disarm, but would simply watch for a more favourable opportunity to put their plans into execution. To garrison the whole frontier with regular troops would expose the province to large expenditure, and the troops, when called upon to act, to calumny and misrepresentation. He accordingly conceived the plan of organising a local militia of 40,000 men, recruited from all classes of the population, Christian and Mussulman alike, to whom the defence of their own localities should be entrusted, and they were to be indemnified if called upon to act beyond the boundaries of their district. By this means a cheap and effective force was provided against all contingencies, and at the same time the confidence reposed in the loyalty of the population generally received a conspicuous demonstration. The defence of the line of the Danube was secured in a similar manner. A succession of guard-houses was established throughout the length of the river, and their defence confided to a river-guard recruited equally from the Christian and Mussulman riverine population.

So ingenious was the plan of organisation, that the term of service for each guardsman did not exceed one month in ten years. The arms and equipments were provided by voluntary subscription raised from all the inhabitants of the province.

During all this time the greater the energy shown by Midhat in the organisation, development and defence of this frontier province of the empire, the greater became the determination of the Slav Committees to undo and defeat his work.

After the late exploits of these committees in Bulgaria, Midhat had organised a system of surveillance at the

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headquarters of these committees, and information having reached him that emissaries had been despatched from Galatz to Belgrade in order to organise a new raid into Bulgaria, he ordered these emissaries to be closely watched and followed in all their movements. On their embarkation at Rustchuk, on board the Austrian vessel *Germania*, he sent photographs of them to the Austrian Consul, with a request that the Ottoman authorities should be allowed to examine the passports of the passengers. Accompanied by an Austrian Consular Agent the Turkish authorities accordingly proceeded on board, where they were immediately received by shots from revolvers on the part of the two suspected agents, who had barricaded themselves in the saloon of the vessel, and had determined to resist arrest. After an indescribable scene of confusion among the panic-stricken passengers aboard, the Turkish *gendarmerie*, acting with the consent of the Consul, succeeded in effecting the capture of the agents, who were both mortally wounded in the encounter.

The capture of these revolutionary agents made a great noise in Europe. General Ignatieff at Constantinople, seized on the circumstance as a pretext to demand the recall of Midhat, accompanying the Servian Agent to the Palace in the audience accorded to the latter, whose complaints were founded on the fact that one of the captured agents was a Servian. Midhat's influence, however, was still in the ascendant, and these intrigues remained for a time without effect.

Other means failing, a desperate and criminal attempt was now made to get rid of this too energetic Pasha. Two attempts to assassinate him followed in quick succession, the first at Rustchuk, where the overseer of the training school fired a shot, fortunately without effect, on the Pasha as he was walking in the school enclosure; and the other by a Servian, who attempted to enter his

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service with the view to assassinating him, and who made a full confession seriously compromising two important personages in Servia. He was sent to Constantinople, tried, and condemned to penal servitude for life, in spite of the strenuous efforts of General Ignatieff in his favour.

Not very long after these stirring events (1868) Midhat was summoned to Constantinople, where he was placed at the head of the Council of State, and he was succeeded in the governorship of the province, for which he had done so much, by Sabri Pasha, the deputy-governor of Nish.

As President of the Council, Midhat marked his short tenure of that office by the institution of a school of Arts and Sciences at Sultan Ahmed, in Stamboul, and by the establishment of a bank for loans, with the special purpose of relieving small employers from the tyranny of usurers. This bank (Emniet Sandighie) still exists. It soon, however, became obvious to Midhat that his system of usefulness in his new ministerial position was strictly limited; his authority in matters pertaining to his own office was constantly overruled on important matters, especially those concerning finance, by the Grand Vizier, acting on the authority of the Sultan, and this incompatibility of views culminated on the question of Turkish railways, whereupon Midhat insisted on resigning. Just at this time Nakieddine Pasha was dismissed from the governorship of the province of Bagdad, and Midhat was appointed Vali of Bagdad (1869).

Hardly had the new Vali reached his post, when he found himself confronted with some difficult problems of quite a different order from those he had dealt with on the Danube, but of a not less serious description. The question of recruiting was the most urgent, and called for immediate solution. The Arab tribes, turbulent and independent by nature, had always shown themselves refractory

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to enlistment, and were now in open revolt against its enforcement. One of the difficulties of the situation consisted in the fact that the military authority in the province was separated from the civil, and was in the hands of the commander of the 6th Army Corps, Samih Pasha, whereas the situation required all authority, military as well as civil, to be concentrated in the hands of a single strong central authority. Midhat did not hesitate at such a crisis to assume the full responsibility of this concentration, and took immediate military steps to suppress the insurrection by force. He ordered the city of Bagdad to be surrounded by cavalry, and sent infantry and artillery to protect the foreign Mission Houses and the non-Mussulman quarters from the fanaticism of the Arabs. He at the same time ordered the bridge over the Tigris to be cut, so as to prevent intercommunication among the rebels; and when these energetic measures had fairly intimidated the Arabs, he offered them a general amnesty on condition of immediate surrender. These conditions were now accepted, and the insurrection suddenly collapsed, and no further resistance was offered to the recruiting. The promptitude with which this dangerous rebellion was suppressed was appreciated by the Porte, and a telegram was received from Constantinople approving the measures he had taken, and placing officially the supreme command of the 6th Army Corps in his hands.

The next serious difficulty was connected with the levying of taxes. This had always been a difficult operation among the nomad tribes, of which the population in a great measure consisted, and was the cause of continual disputes and insurrections. Matters had, however, now reached a crisis, for a colonel at the head of a battalion of regulars sent to Divanie and Dogara to collect the tithes was surrounded by tribesmen to the number of ten thousand men, and himself killed and his troops killed

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or dispersed. The new Vali seized at once the seriousness of the situation, for the encouragement which this success afforded the tribesmen threatened to give rise to a general insurrection of all the surrounding nomads.

It was necessary to avenge the defeat at once and to make a signal example of the tribesmen concerned. Midhat accordingly ordered a large force, consisting of seven battalions of infantry, four thousand cavalry, with a complement of artillery, to proceed directly to Dogara, under the command of Samih Pasha, whilst with three thousand chosen troops he hastened himself to the disaffected district. A pitched battle now took place between the Arabs and the troops, which resulted in the complete defeat of the former and the capture of their chief. A not unusual incident accompanied the close of the battle. A Shiite Sheik, Abdul Kerim, was marching at the head of a considerable force of tribesmen from the Shiite districts of Urfa and Aleppo to join the rebels, when he received the news of their defeat. Pretending that he was on the road to offer his services to the Government, he joined his forces to those of the Vali, and accompanied the victorious troops on their entry into Bagdad. A military tribunal was at once instituted to try the rebels; the rebel chiefs were condemned and executed, but the tribesmen, on the promise of future good behaviour, were released.

Midhat Pasha clearly discerned that if an end was to be put to these chronic troubles, and these nomad tribes were to be reduced to anything like permanent order, it was not sufficient to defeat them in battle, and that a radical change had to be brought about in their general status, and especially the conditions of land tenure in the country. The Arab cultivator, for the most part, held his lands from the State on the condition of giving three-fourths of the produce to the State, retaining

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one-fourth for himself. Such a system naturally discouraged agriculture and rendered all improvements in cultivation impossible. The consequence was that, for the most part, the Arab shunned the soil, preferring predatory to industrial modes of gaining his living. Midhat determined to attach him to the soil by giving him rights of proprietorship, and divided large tracts of land into plots, which were offered for sale on easy and advantageous terms, special provision being made against accumulation of plots into single hands. The success of this policy was remarkable, and whereas the revenues of the State increased, the turbulence of the tribesmen, and the risings which had become chronic, greatly diminished.

The agricultural prosperity that resulted from these measures stimulated other branches of industry and rendered it necessary to provide outlets for the newly created surplus of the country. The first step in this direction was to render navigable the Tigris and Euphrates, the great arteries of the country, and to improve or create the means of communication between their two banks, and between the different towns situated along their course. The only service of the kind that existed consisted of the boats of an English company plying between Bagdad and Bussora. Midhat determined to start a service of Turkish boats to supply adequately the needs now felt, in the same way that he had formerly done on the Danube when he was Governor of Bulgaria. He ordered the existing vessels to be repaired, new vessels of a larger tonnage to be constructed, and coal *dépôts* to be formed at Mascat, Aden, Bender and Bushire; and now, for the first time in history, steamers under the Ottoman flag were to be seen periodically in the Suez Canal, on their way to Constantinople. The *Babel*, one of these vessels, which had originally cost £T88,000 for construction, was bought for the sum of

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£T33,000 from a bankrupt company, and on its very first voyage between Constantinople and Bussora, which coincided with the time of the pilgrimages, it cleared £T35,000—more than sufficient to cover its purchase price. A net surplus of £T1000 a month resulted from this improved river navigation, and Midhat now determined on extensive dredging works, with a view to extending the navigation northwards and adapting it to vessels of a larger tonnage. Chakir Bey (afterwards Marshal and Ambassador to St Petersburg, and one of Midhat's faithful partisans) was despatched north with a company of engineers, and reported favourably on the enterprise. Thereupon dredging and other engineering works were immediately ordered to be undertaken.

The periodical overflow of the waters of the Euphrates had converted large tracts of country into marshes, and marsh fevers in consequence becoming endemic, rendered them uninhabitable. Drainage works on a large scale, with a view of reclaiming these lands and of curing the insalubrity, were also undertaken. Irrigation works were likewise started, and much attention was devoted to this subject by the Pasha, with a view to gradually restoring the system introduced by the first Arab conquerors, which had converted this country into the Garden of the East, and rendered the Caliphate of Bagdad proverbial for its wealth and prosperity. A tramway, too, between Bagdad and Kiazimie was constructed, and its entire length, 7 miles, completed within a year. A textile manufactory, too, was started, and an engine of 70-h.p. ordered in France, the despatch of which was only delayed by the breaking out of the Franco-German War (1870).

Whilst energetically pursuing these material improvements, Midhat Pasha was far from neglecting the moral side of the problem of Reform. Schools were opened in every district; hospitals, refuges for old age, and loan

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banks everywhere arose, and a printing-press established where the newspaper *Zora* was published, and municipal institutions for lighting and watering and other local purposes were instituted in all the principal centres. A petroleum spring discovered in the vilayet was immediately utilised for public purposes. It was not too much to hope that a decade of such enlightened government would have repaired the neglect of centuries and restored their ancient prosperity to the rich valleys of the Tigris and Euphrates.

In 1870 the Shah of Persia, accompanied by a numerous suite, came to visit the holy places of Nejef and Kerbela, and although the province had to support the whole expense of this costly visit, amounting to over £T30,000, Midhat Pasha determined to give the royal visitor a reception worthy of his exalted rank, and to profit by the occasion by settling some vexed questions long pending between the two neighbouring Mahomedan countries. The circulation of depreciated Persian money in the province had long disturbed the value of exchanges and created confusion in commercial transactions. The exchange value of this currency, and the amount of it to be issued in the future, were now agreed upon. The incursions and depredations of nomad Kurds, the Hamavends, Sendjabi, etc., shifting their camping-ground from Persian to Turkish territory, and *vice versa*, so as to evade taxation and elude the authorities of either nation, whilst plundering indiscriminately the peaceful inhabitants of both, had long been a scandal, creating a state of affairs on the frontier difficult to cope with. A better understanding and a combined policy of surveillance between the Persian and Turkish authorities on the frontier were now established, and block-houses on the model of those successfully introduced on the Servian frontier were constructed, to the infinite relief of the

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agricultural population of both nations, situated on the entire length of this extensive line. Midhat Pasha failed, however, to obtain the sanction of the Persian authorities to a scheme which he had long cherished, and which he trusted to this occasion to be able to put into execution.

At Nejef, one of the sacred places to which periodical pilgrimages were made, there were rich treasures, the proceeds of the offerings of Indian and Persian devotees of the Shiite sect during centuries past, which, on the invasion of the Wahabites, had been hidden in a cave. Midhat Pasha had ordered the cave to be opened and an official inventory to be made of the treasures that it contained. This inventory revealed treasures of diamonds, rubies, pearls, and other precious stones, to the value of no less than £T300,000, and Midhat proposed a public sale of the treasure and the appropriation of its proceeds to works of public utility, such as a railway between Persia and Bagdad, or, if such an appropriation of a sacred treasure appeared too secular, at least to the creation of such much-needed institutions as hospitals and refuges and caravanserai for the pilgrims on the route of their pilgrimages to the holy places. Even this reasonable proposal, however, was vetoed by the Persian Ulemas, and the whole scheme falling through, Midhat ordered the treasure to be carefully deposited again in the cave from which it had been taken, and its entrance secured with the official seals of the Turkish and Persian authorities.

Certain events now took place having a bearing beyond the boundaries of the province and of a quasi-international character. The town of Bussora, important on account of its geographical position as the terminus station of the Euphrates on the Persian Gulf, suffered from the inconvenience of an extremely unhealthy climate, result-

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ing from the stagnant waters of the Achar, a branch of the river Shat-el-Arab, on which it was built. Midhat determined to remove the site of the township on to the main river, and with that view built a Governor's house and Government buildings on the new site as a nucleus for a new city. Outside this enclosure, the township of Nassrieh was laid out on plans furnished by the Pasha, to become the capital of the sandjak of Muntefik, and to replace the old town of Suk esh-sheyuh which was falling into ruins, and was deficient in all the necessaries of civilisation.

Sixty miles from Bussora, and on the coast of Nedjed, is situated the little town of Koweit of six thousand houses, the inhabitants of which are all Mussulmans. Midhat Pasha's predecessor, Namik Pasha, had endeavoured to bring this population within the influence of his jurisdiction, but they successfully resisted all attempts at imposing taxation upon them, and had maintained their quasi-independence under their own chiefs, the descendants of one Sabah who had come with this tribe of "Moutayer" from Nedjed five hundred years before, and had maintained ever since with practical independence a republican form of government, choosing by election their own judges (*cadis*) and the professors of their religious schools (*medresses*). Owing to the restricted extent of their territory, the inhabitants, like those of Venice, took chiefly to maritime pursuits, and upwards of two hundred small vessels of various tonnage traversed in every direction the Indian Ocean, as far as the coasts of Zanzibar, and practically monopolised the pearl fisheries of the Persian Gulf. Although they had adopted a special flag of their own, they occasionally hoisted a Dutch or English flag, to secure certain privileges accorded to these flags by the capitulations. It seemed highly desirable to Midhat Pasha to put an end to this

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equivocal status of the inhabitants of Koweit, and to regularise their position. He accordingly entered into negotiations with them, and offered the full enjoyment of their autonomy and privileges under the government of their own Sheik Sabah, provided they recognised themselves as forming part and parcel of the Ottoman empire, and adopted the Ottoman flag as their national ensign. These conditions were accepted by the people of Koweit, and their territory became a sandjak of the vilayet of Bagdad. A formal treaty to that effect was drawn up and signed and confirmed by *berats* (writs of investiture) from Constantinople, and new schools and mosques arose in Koweit.

After the settlement of Koweit, Midhat's attention was turned to the conquest of the Nedjed, the most important event that marked his governorship of Bagdad.

The Nedjed is the geographical denomination of an extent of country including about a quarter of the Arabian peninsula. Soliman, the conqueror, after defeating the Portuguese squadron in the Persian Gulf, had annexed it to his empire, and had despatched a special governor from Constantinople to administer the province of Hassa. A century after this, the inhabitants rose in revolt and formed themselves into a separate State, which included the island of Bahrein in its limits. On the first breaking out of these troubles, the Egyptian troops sent out to repress the revolt had been successful, and had defeated the rebels at Riad and Derayeh, forcing the Wahabites to recognise the authority of the Sultan, but the Ottoman Government, whose attention was now turned elsewhere, neglected to follow up this success, and the Nedjed gradually regained its independence under the dynasty of Wahab.

In the time of Midhat Pasha, the reigning Sheik, Abdul Fazil, whilst in the enjoyment of quasi-independ-

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ence himself, had never dreamt of encroaching on the neighbouring territories under the authority of the Sultan, nor of exciting revolt among their inhabitants by preaching among them the particular tenets of Wahabism; but his brother Saood, under the instigation of certain counsellors, with a view to supplanting him in the government of the country, declared war on him, and succeeded in dethroning him.

Abdul Fazil now had recourse to the intervention of Midhat Pasha, whom he warned of the probable consequences that would follow the victory of his brother with respect to the propagandism of Wahabite ideas among the surrounding tribes. Midhat determined to act, but before entering on a campaign that might prove an arduous undertaking, he took measures to ascertain the exact forces that Saood had at his disposal, as well as the topography of the country where military operations would have to be carried out. With this view, spies and agents disguised as merchants were sent in various directions, and soundings were taken of different parts of the coast. A full report as to the situation of the Nedjed in all these respects was in due course furnished to Midhat, who in the meantime had requested and obtained the necessary authorisation from the Grand Vizier, Aali Pasha, for the projected campaign.

Midhat was aware that certain delicate international questions might arise in the course of the expedition. The policy of England, as represented by its Indian Government, had always been to favour rather than to discourage the desire of independence on the part of the Arab chiefs in this part of the world. A serious and systematic attempt, therefore, to suppress their independence and to attach these distant members permanently to the body of the Ottoman Empire might seem to run counter to the policy of the Indian Govern-

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ment on the shores of the neighbouring Persian Gulf. Midhat had always been a stout and consistent supporter of the English Alliance, but he was by no means inclined for that reason to sacrifice to that alliance the essential interest of the Ottoman Empire; and while resolved to proceed with tact and due considerateness for the interests and susceptibilities of a friendly Power, he did not hesitate, in spite of a certain amount of sympathy manifested by England towards Saood, to proceed with the expedition he had resolved upon.

The most populous province of Nedjed was Hassa, with its port Elkatif. Thirty-two hours distant from this port are situated the townships of Ehofuf and Elmuberez, surrounded by fortified walls. Six hours distant from Elkatif is the port of Ras Tannurah, offering favourable conditions for a disembarkation of troops. Securing his communications between Bussora and Elkatif, a distance of 360 miles by sea, by means of the proffered co-operation of Abdullah Elsabah, Sheik of Koweit, who put his flotilla at the disposal of the Pasha for that purpose, Midhat embarked five battalions of regular troops with a complement of artillery under the command of Nafiz Pasha, General of division, for the port of Ras Tannurah, whence they immediately marched to Elkatif, which after a faint resistance capitulated to the Ottoman troops. The surrender of Elmuberez and other strategical points in the Wahabs' country followed in quick succession, and in a very short space of time the partisans of Saood were dispersed and the whole country brought under Imperial rule.

Midhat was now about to start himself for the Nedjed, with a view to organise the country as a province of the Ottoman Empire, when his attention was called by the Governor of Diarbekir, Kurd Ismail Pasha, to the suspicious movements in the neighbourhood of Urfa of Sheik Abdul Kerim, of the tribe of Chamar, the same, it

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will be remembered, who, on the occasion of the revolt of the Dogara tribesmen, arriving too late to assist the defeated rebels, turned round and offered his services to the victorious Pasha.

Thinking the present occasion more favourable for carrying out his cherished policy, he was marching straight on Bagdad, killing and pillaging on his route. Warned by Kurd Ismail, Midhat took immediate steps to crush him. Abdul Kerim had divided his forces into three parts, the first advancing on Zor, the second on Mosul, and the third, under his own command, marching on Bagdad. On this information reaching him, Midhat ordered two battalions of regulars to reinforce Kurd Ismail, whilst General Echeref Pasha was directed to fortify Zor and other strategical points on the Tigris and Euphrates. These troops coming into collision with the first division of Abdul Kerim's army in the neighbourhood of Zor, easily dispersed them, whilst Kurd Ismail himself, attacking the second division of the rebels in the neighbourhood of Mosul, completely routed it. On learning of the successive defeats of the two wings of this invading army, Abdul Kerim quickly abandoned all idea of advancing, and took measures to secure his own safety. His retreat by the desert being cut off by the droughts prevailing at this season, he made for his own native country, the Chamar, but Midhat threatening Sheik Ibn Reshid, chief of the tribe Djebel, if he ventured to offer refuge to the rebel, diverted Abdul Kerim's retreat to the direction of Muntefik by Hilah and Kerbela, where he fell in with Nassir Pasha, and in the fight that ensued was wounded and taken prisoner. After a regular trial for armed rebellion and treachery, he was condemned to death, and the sentence being approved of by the authorities at Constantinople, he was in due course hanged at Mosul. His brother, Ferhan Pasha, now received the chieftainship

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of the tribe Chamar, with an increase of territory and a regular monthly subsidy, whilst the turbulent tribesmen acknowledged the authority of the Imperial Government and consented to pay the taxes. This settlement was followed by a resumption of agricultural pursuits on the part of the inhabitants, and the general pacification of the country.

But troubles in these parts did not end with the conquest of the Nedjed and the defeat of Abdul Kerim. Abdullah Fazil—who had by means of Ottoman arms been restored to the government of Elkatif, with the Turkish title of Mutessarif, in the new vilayet of Nedjed—once freed from all apprehension respecting the ambition of his brother Saood, began to manifest restlessness under Turkish regular administration. Discontent, too, with Turkish fiscal arrangements was felt by the tribesmen, and affairs began again to assume a threatening aspect. Midhat determined to inquire into the causes of this discontent, and finding that exemption from all taxation, save that sanctioned by the Mussulman law, viz. the tithe, had been consecrated by secular usage among them, and that the neighbouring tribes who had come under English protection, Oman, Mascat, etc., fully enjoyed the privilege of this exemption, determined to satisfy the population of Elkatif in this respect, and forthwith consented to limit their liability to taxation to the regular payment of the tithe.

There remained the island of Bahrein, the conquest of which, on account of the importance of its position on the Persian Gulf, Midhat now determined to effect. In order to superintend operations himself, and in case of any international friction demanding his presence, Midhat started for the Nedjed. Abdullah Fazil hearing of this, and fearing that his own equivocal conduct was the cause of the journey, fled from Elkatif to Riad, and in spite of

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the Pasha's assurances, refused to return. His dismissal from the Government was thereupon pronounced, and the district converted into the sandjak of Hassa, and together with the command of the troops, was entrusted to Nafiz Pasha. A friendly interchange of views now took place between Midhat Pasha and the Government of India, the result of which was that the island of Bahrein was officially annexed to the Mutessarifat of Hassa. Two Turkish corvettes, the *Liman* and the *Iskenderoun*, under the command of Arif Bey, sailed for the island, followed by two English gunboats under Commander Pelly, and the Turkish and English vessels exchanged salutes and other friendly courtesies in the port. When the Turkish sailors disembarked on the island they were received with the most indescribable enthusiasm by the islanders, who had not seen the Turkish ensign flying on a man-of-war for two centuries past. The Sheik of the island offered an appropriate piece of land to be used as a *dépôt* for coals for Turkish vessels, and offered to place the resources of the island at the disposition of the Turkish authorities if necessity should arise. On weighing anchor from Bahrein the two corvettes were joined by the vessel that had Midhat Pasha on board, and the little flotilla sailed together to Koweit. Here the same scenes were enacted that had distinguished the visit to Bahrein, and nothing occurred to mar the cordiality that existed between the Ottoman and British forces that met in these Eastern ports. The convention which had been previously agreed upon between Midhat and the British authorities prevented any friction between them.

The re-establishment of Imperial authority in these regions justified, and indeed necessitated, a considerable increase in the Turkish flotilla in these waters. Before the opening of the Suez Canal, Turkey only possessed the two corvettes the *Boursa*, and the *Ismir*, neither of which

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was in a sea-going condition. Midhat sent the *Boursa* to Bombay to undergo repairs, and added the *Libnan*, *Iskenderoun*, *Deniz*, *Babel*, *Ninova*, *Nedjed*, and *Assour*, besides ten vessels of light draught for river police, and to reinforce the Bagdad squadron. The port of Bussora, no longer adequate to the naval requirements of the province, was enlarged and improved, and works for an inner harbour capable of anchoring vessels of 10-feet draught were commenced at Kut-el-Frenghi on the river Shat-el-arab.

All these various improvements and reforms, and the general advance in the political and administrative status of this important province, were highly appreciated by the Government of the Porte, which was now under the enlightened guidance of Aali Pasha, who addressed the following letter to Midhat Pasha :—

"EXCELLENCY,—The very weak state of health from which I have been for some time suffering has been the cause of the delay that has occurred in answering your letters concerning the voyage of His Majesty the Shah. Pray accept my most sincere excuses. I beg to congratulate you in a very especial manner, on your brilliant successes in the Nedjed. Everything seems to indicate that, thanks to the tact with which you have brought about the pacification of the Provinces of Assir, the political importance of which is so considerable, the whole Arabic peninsula will soon return to its ancient status. By your services you have merited the glorious title, 'Haremein Muhteremein.'

"The effect of the Shah's visit on the Shiite population in the province was the subject of considerable preoccupation with us, but the good intentions and loyalty manifested on both sides, have smoothed over many difficulties and brought about highly desirable results. . . . It is quite certain that Nevab Ikbal Eldevle, being a just and upright man, will blame and discourage any flagrant departure from justice and equity on the part of his co-religionists.

"Be good enough to thank him in my name, when the

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occasion offers, for the seal in agate, the engraving and inscription on which are very fine.

"Prince Abbas Mirza has arrived here, and he has twice been received in Audience by his Majesty. . . . He seems a polished and intelligent person, but I have not yet had any opportunity to form an estimate of his character.

"I am,

"(seal) MEHMED EMIN AALI.

"23 *Djemaziel Evel*, 1288 (1871), *Hegira*."

By the same courtier the Sultan Abdul Aziz sent Midhat Pasha a sword of honour set with diamonds, with the inscription "Nedjed" engraved on it. This was the closing scene of Midhat's governorship of Bagdad, and with it closed the first half of his career, viz., as Provincial Governor. Circumstances were occurring at Constantinople destined to bring him on the scene there, to play his part in the important political events about to occur in the metropolis.

But a change of a portentous nature had taken place at Constantinople. Fuad Pasha and Aali Pasha, whose prestige and popularity had gained an ascendancy over the Sultan, and had, since his accession, practically monopolised power, and who had strenuously supported Midhat in all his reforming measures both on the Danube and the Euphrates, died within a few months of each other. The disappearance of these two able and powerful Ministers synchronized with the return of Abdul Aziz from a tour in Europe, when symptoms of an ominous character began to reveal themselves in the sovereign. He showed himself impatient of contradiction or advice of any kind, expressing openly his relief at being freed from the incubus of his former Grand Viziers; he completely changed the etiquette of the Court, imposing on the occasion of audiences an antiquated ceremonial, accompanied by unwonted prostrations to be observed on entering the Imperial presence, and he directed that henceforth he should be addressed in

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inflated language, strange even to the forms of Oriental adulation. But what was more serious than these triflings of Imperial vanity, was the fact that he now launched out, careless of the resources of the budget, on the most lavish expenditure of every kind both of a public and private nature. Fleets of costly ironclads were ordered and equipped without regard to their cost; marble palaces rose, as by enchantment, on the banks of the Bosphorus, and every whim and caprice on his own part or that of the Palace had to be gratified without stint or delay. He found in Mahmoud Nedim a compliant Grand Vizier, who, in return for the retention of power, undertook to find the ways and means for the gratification of all his master's wishes.

The reflex action of this state of things at head-quarters was felt in the most distant provinces. When the exactions of the Palace had expropriated the balance of the sums destined to the various services of the State, recourse was had to the provinces to make good the deficiencies by extraordinary "benevolences" and remittances. Works of public utility or necessity were accordingly suspended, and the funds necessary for their completion diverted to the metropolis. Incompetent favourites arrived from Constantinople with orders to the Vali to provide them with lucrative posts, and by these means the whole fabric of the new administration, painfully and patiently built up, was dislocated and deranged. Midhat, recognising the impossibility of governing in such conditions, resigned his Governorship and set out for Constantinople.

THE FIRST GRAND VIZIERATE OF MIDHAT PASHA.

On his arrival in Constantinople, Midhat found that an order had been issued for his banishment from the capital, under cloak of nominating him to the government of

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Adrianople. Insisting, however, on the exercise of his right of audience with the sovereign before setting out for his new post, he made such strong representations to the Sultan with respect to the general situation of the empire, that Abdul Aziz thereupon abruptly dismissed Mahmoud Nedim, and appointed Midhat Grand Vizier in his place (1873).

As soon as he had filled the principal offices of State with the best material he could find—Chirvani Rushdi Pasha, Djemil Pasha, and Sadik Pasha—the first and most pressing necessity that confronted him was to endeavour to put the Finances in order. This was no easy task. The public accounts presented were entirely fictitious. His first discovery was to the effect that whereas the budget showed a surplus of half a million (£T), there was in point of fact a deficit of three millions. The actual appropriation of the sums debited in the accounts presented another difficulty. A sum of £T100,000 disbursed by the Treasury was not accounted for at all. Midhat insisted on a full inquiry, and, discovering that this sum had been appropriated by the late Grand Vizier, directed an investigation into the matter before the members of the Council of State, who ordered its immediate restitution by Mahmoud Nedim, and recommended his banishment. He, however, alleging in private that this sum in question although nominally attributed to him was really allotted to the Palace, found in the Valide Sultan and her *entourage* most powerful allies in his duel with Midhat. Banished by the insistence of the Grand Vizier, first to Adrianople and then to Trebizond, he soon obtained permission to return to Constantinople.

Two distinct parties began now to stand out in clear relief. On the one side was Midhat, warmly supported by public opinion in the capital and in the provinces, and by all that was most enlightened among the Softas and Ulemas,

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headed by Chakir Effendi, and on the other side the whole army of corruption, headed by Mahmoud Nedim and protected by the Valide Sultan and the Palace Camarilla. Another powerful ally of the late Grand Vizier was General Ignatieff, who by the most ingenious and persistent methods—condescending even to the resources of the stage—worked on the mind of the Sultan in order to restore Mahmoud Nedim to power.

An incident soon occurred which brought matters to a crisis. The Khedive of Egypt, desirous of changing the order of succession in his family and of obtaining various privileges and prerogatives from his suzerain, was in the habit of making periodical visits to Constantinople, carrying away with him each time, by judicious payments, some shred of the sovereign rights of the Porte. These visits became a regular source of income and emolument to the Palace and all its myrmidons. Arriving at Constantinople on the occasion of one of these visits he found Midhat Pasha installed as Grand Vizier, and to his surprise and disappointment, and to the discomfiture of the Palace clique, he was obliged this time to return to Alexandria with his presents, *re infectâ*.

It soon became apparent that one of two things must happen: the Sultan would either have to change the whole *régime* and scale of expenditure of the Palace, or change his Grand Vizier; and as he never really contemplated the former course, he adopted the latter. The determining cause was Midhat's action with reference to certain scandals—incidents connected with Baron Hirsch's railway schemes.

It is only in a despotic country, where State contracts are signed in the dark, and *cahiers de charge* are examined by carefully chosen experts and passed by complaisant accountants, that such a scandal as the Hirsch railways is possible or conceivable. If the cynicism of the whole

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transaction had not become notorious, and thus excited as much laughter as its nefariousness caused indignation, it would be worth while to set out in detail all the circumstances of this stupendous business.

To obtain a contract giving unlimited control over the richest forests in the world, on the pretext of cutting sleepers, is in itself a pretty smart stroke of business. To stipulate for payment of railways according to the mileage executed, irrespective of topographical considerations or local requirements, is a triumph of contracting skill; but to claim payment for work done in the plains only, on the basis of an average calculated for working through plains and mountain-chains alike, is the very glory of financial genius. The secret, too, of the art was as simple as the result was lucrative. Backsheesh in adequate amounts, distributed at appropriate moments in the right quarters, was the alpha and omega of the business.

Midhat, in his determination to strike at the root of the whole system of corruption, irrespective of persons or of consequences, having discovered that the highest person in the land was himself a recipient of the largesses of the Austrian baron, insisted on the restitution of the sums received. The Sultan listened to the advice tendered, returned the money, and dismissed his Grand Vizier.

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CHAPTER III

DEPOSITION AND DEATH OF ABDUL AZIZ

AFTER an honourable exile as Governor of Salonica, Midhat obtained leave to return to Constantinople, and after a brief tenure of the office of Minister of Justice and of the Presidency of the Council of State, he handed in his resignation in the following terms, and retired to his Konak in the neighbourhood of the capital and awaited developments :

To Midhat Pasha, President of the Council of State.

"I beg that your Highness will be good enough to instruct me as to the reply I am to make to His Majesty, in case he should question me as to the motives for your resignation.

"HAFIZ MEHEMED
"*Head Chamberlain (of Sultan Aziz).*"

Reply.

"EXCELLENCY,—My request is not based upon any personal motives. I have nothing but praise for all my colleagues, both high and low; but the motives which have forced me to this decision are, as I have already set out in my petition, the difficulties of the position in which we are placed, that is to say, our finances are in a hopeless condition, the civil administration is utterly disorganised, and the state of the army is beyond description; all this compromised the security and credit of the country, and the non-Mussulman element loudly proclaims the intention that it long ago formed of placing itself under foreign protection. While the faults and mistakes made twenty years ago have prepared

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the way for the disasters which are now showing themselves in rapid succession, and which are sufficient to employ all our time, our foreign policy has also been misdirected, the feelings of the Powers have changed towards us, and they entertain hostile intentions towards our country to such a degree that the most friendly Power has lost all confidence in us. It is impossible for us not to deplore the unfortunate results which this line of conduct cannot fail to produce for Turkey, and for the faithful servants of His Majesty—that of being unable to see the future clearly before them. In view of the attitude adopted by His Highness the Grand Vizier, which gives reason to hope that this state of affairs may be remedied, I feel compelled to devote my feeble efforts and support to those duties which are specially incumbent on me in the existing crisis through which the Ministry is passing. But as I have explained in the petition which I have already sent in, I have passed the greater portion of my life in provincial service, and have never taken part in such delicate and complicated affairs, and am therefore compelled to ask you to have the goodness to intercede with His Majesty to accept my resignation.

"I am, etc.,

"MIDHAT.

"29 *Cheval*, 1291 (1874)."

In the meantime things went from bad to worse in the affairs of the State. Grand Viziers one after the other were appointed and dismissed. Mehemet Rushdi Pasha, Essad Pasha, Chervani Rushdi Pasha, held office for a few months only, and with the best of intentions were utterly unable to grapple with the situation, and the "villain of the piece," Mahmoud Nedim, was at last recalled to office. The finances of the country were fast getting beyond all remedy. Although it was only twenty years since the fatal secret of a national debt had been learnt in Turkey, bankruptcy was already staring the country in the face. So palpable was this to the best friends of Turkey, that Mr Yorke in the British Parliament, in the interests of a long-standing ally of Great Britain, and of the alliance itself, called attention to the state of Turkish finances, and

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summoned the British Government to intervene through its ambassador at Constantinople to endeavour to ward off impending catastrophes. Three months after this warning the Turkish Treasury suspended payment on half the amount of the coupons of the public debt. 1875

The outcry caused by this measure throughout Europe, not only in strictly commercial and financial circles, but in every class of the community, was indescribable. Tempted by the high rate of interest, and confiding in the assurances of financiers interested in floating successive loans that "Turkey always has paid and therefore always would pay" the coupons of its debts, the *petite bourgeoisie* and the small investor had largely placed their savings in Turkish bonds, and the "tightness" and misery caused by the suspension was undoubtedly very great (1875). Meetings of indignant bond-holders were held in every capital and large city in Europe, and the Turkish Government and the Turkish nation, the Pasha and the people, were confounded in a common anathema. The ground was admirably prepared for an explosion of political passion directed against Turkey. The occasion for this was not long in presenting itself.

During the second Vizierate of Essad Pasha, certain movements of a suspicious nature took place on the Montenegrin frontier which would have arrested the attention of a more vigilant Government. A party of sixty Slav peasants from the village of Nevesinje in the Commune of Mostar, on some trivial quarrel with the local authorities, emigrated in a body across the frontier into Montenegro. In a short time, through the good offices of the Russian Ambassador, they obtained leave to return to their homes; but very soon, in concert with their Montenegrin friends, they organised a *razzia* on the lands of the neighbouring Mussulmans. Instead of nipping this incipient rebellion in the bud and enquiring into its cause, the local authorities

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temporised with its leaders and awaited instructions from Constantinople as to how they were to proceed. Encouraged by this impunity, and with the assurance of external support, the insurgent bands rapidly increased in numbers, and when at last the Government determined to act, it found itself in presence of a serious rebellion. Essad Pasha, well-intentioned but weak, and preoccupied with the serious outlook of affairs generally, accepted the insidious offer of the Russian and Austrian Ambassadors to intervene between the leaders of the bands and the Supreme Government. No policy could have been more fatal. It afforded the greatest possible encouragement to the rebels, who considered the step an acknowledgment by the Government of its own inability to deal with the movement; it practically conceded belligerent rights to the rebels, and it encouraged the habit and consecrated the principle of interference by foreign governments in the internal affairs of the empire.

The hollowness of the offer was apparent the moment the terms of surrender came to be discussed, and the net result of this diplomatic comedy was, as was no doubt intended, that what was at first an insignificant rising of a handful of peasants was raised to the dignity of a recognised rebellion that could negotiate on equal terms with the Imperial Government through the medium of foreign consuls and ambassadors.

Mahmoud Nedim had now succeeded Essad Pasha as Grand Vizier (1875), and as no effective measures were taken to suppress the rising, it went on spreading from village to village and district to district till the contagion was caught in Bulgaria. There, in the beginning of 1874, a commencement of unrest showed itself in the districts of Drenova, Kazanlik, and Zagra; but the local authorities (warned by what had taken place in the Herzegovina through the neglect of initial precautions) had all the

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leaders of the movement arrested. Thereupon General Ignatieff made such energetic representations to the Porte, that orders arrived not only for the release of the imprisoned malcontents, but for the dismissal of all the functionaries concerned in their arrest.[1]

The effect of this novel and original mode of dealing with an insurrection was soon apparent in the effervescence and excitement it caused among the Mussulman population throughout the province. They saw rebel bands, the leaders of which were patronised and supported by foreign consuls and diplomatists, being organised without disguise and approaching their own hearths, whereas all defensive measures on the part of their own natural leaders were discountenanced and punished. They thereupon resolved to take the matter into their own hands, and formed vigilance committees and organised local bands under the command of retired *zaptiés* throughout the province.

In such psychological conditions an explosion of popular passions was certain sooner or later to take place. The occasion for this was furnished by an incident that occurred at Salonica on the 5th May 1875. This incident was, with the Bulgarian insurrection and the Berlin Note, one of the external difficulties that confronted the Govern-

[1] "*The First Dragoman of the Russian Embassy to Mahmoud Nedim.*"*

"MY DEAR HIGHNESS,—I have communicated the observations of your Highness to His Excellency the Ambassador, who has assured us in his reply that he will use his influence to arrest the Herzegovinian insurrection. No one desires more earnestly than ourselves the success of Your Highness' projects.

"Your Highness may give the necessary assurances to whom they may concern." (1873).

[Taken from a pamphlet called "Ussi Inkillab," which was published at the beginning of the reign of Abdul Hamid—an interesting document in proving this fact.]

* *Nineteenth Century*, January 1903.

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ment, and placed it in a very critical position. A young Bulgarian girl had come by rail to Salonica from a neighbouring village on the evening of the 5th May, accompanied by a *hoadja*, with a view to making a declaration of conversion to Mahomedanism before the Grand Council of Salonica—a formality required by the law, as a preliminary to her being married to a young Mahomedan of her village. On her arrival at the station she was met by a mob of Greeks and Bulgarians who pulled off her *yashmak* and *feradje* (mantle and veil), and forcing her into a carriage, in spite of the efforts of four *zaptiés* who came up in the middle of the disturbance, drove her at a gallop to the American Consulate, where the brother of the Vice-Consul (a Bulgarian), who had arranged the abduction, concealed her during the night. The next day he had her removed to the house of a friend, so that all trace of the girl should be lost. But early next morning a Mussulman mob, comprising (as in such occurrences is certain to be the case) the worst and most violent sections of the population, had assembled at the Konak and loudly demanded the restoration of the girl and her appearance before the Grand Council. As their demands were not complied with, they retired to the Saatli Mosque, adjacent to the Governor's Konak, where they reiterated their demands for the restoration of the girl. Unfortunately, by some fatality which was never satisfactorily explained, the German and French Consuls found their way into the mosque in the very midst of excited Mussulmans. Whether they went there of their own accord to remonstrate and argue with the people, or approaching the scene of the demonstration were hustled into the mosque, was never cleared up. But once they appeared there, the frenzy of the mob burst all bounds, and the most violent amongst them, pursuing the Consuls into one of the apartments of the *Muderris* (Academy) in connection with the mosque, fell on them with iron bars

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hastily snatched from the windows of the mosque, and murdered them on the spot. The English Consul, Mr Blunt, accompanied by his *cavass*, seems to have been the only one who kept his head on this occasion and acted with presence of mind and sagacity; for, at the risk of his own life, he forced his way to the Konak, and when he found that the Governor could not effect the restoration of the girl, which was the only way to calm the mob and rescue the Consuls, he sent to the American Vice-Consulate to apprize Mr Lazaro, who was the cause of the whole disturbance, of the perilous situation of his colleagues, the French and German Consuls, and to implore him to restore the girl. Unfortunately, Mr Lazaro at first procrastinated and pretended that he did not know where the girl was, and so precious time was lost; and when subsequently, on a further appeal from Mr Consul Blunt, he delivered up the girl, it was too late, for the crime against the foreign Consuls who had intervened had been accomplished.

Although the Ottoman Government took immediate steps to punish the authors of this crime—the six principal leaders of which were immediately executed, and the remainder punished with severe terms of penal servitude—the effect of the outrage on the public opinion of Europe, in the existing state of feeling in regard to Turkey, can easily be conceived. It excited indignation everywhere; but the anti-Turkish Press, now pretty numerous, seized on it with avidity and pointed to it as irrefragable evidence of the incorrigible fanaticism of the whole Mussulman population of the empire, and called for various coercive measures, amounting in some cases to a combined crusade, to protect the Christians in the country, now threatened with wholesale massacre.[1]

It was in vain that Europeans who had lived all their

[1] See Appendix.—"Bulgarian Atrocities."

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lives in the country, and were acquainted from personal experience with the feelings and opinions of the inhabitants, protested against these exaggerations and deprecated their vain terrors. Colonel James Baker, an English resident for twenty years in the neighbourhood of Salonica, where he had been farming on a large scale, and whose occupation had brought him in contact with all sorts and conditions of men, Christian and Mahomedan alike, wrote a book ridiculing these apprehensions, and communicating his experiences of the harmony and good fellowship existing among the adherents of both religions, with whom he had for twenty years been brought into contact.

But the experience of people living on the spot could not stem the torrent of hostile prejudice fortified by such dramatic examples as the murder of the Consuls at Salonica. General Ignatieff, whose plans were being admirably served by events, was not slow in lending the weight of his authority to the propagation of these imaginary terrors. He embodied 300 Montenegrin workmen at Constantinople to serve as a body-guard of his Embassy, to the amusement of his more sensible colleagues, who were quite aware of the baselessness of the fears that were the pretext of these ostentatious precautions. But the *mise en scène* contrived by the ingenious ambassador was not the less effective, and these picturesque mountaineers as they lounged about the streets of Pera, in their handsome national costume, bristling with multifarious arms in their embroidered sashes, were striking advertisements of the terrible dangers that threatened all Christians in the fanatical land of the Osmanli.

Servia, too, was preparing to enter the lists. Although without the shred of a grievance against the suzerain Power, nor indeed alleging any, Prince Milan, moved by the sole ambition to convert his principality into a kingdom, had easily allowed himself to be drawn into the

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conspiracy of a concerted attack on the Ottoman Empire. All the reserves of his army were called out and armed with newly imported rifles; and trains full of Russian officers of all grades and ranks, from Generals of divisions to corporals and sergeants, arrived daily at the capital to organise this militia into a fighting machine, and to drill the raw peasants into soldiers. The whole country, in fact, from Belgrade to Alexinatz, was an armed camp.

Everything portended important developments for the ensuing spring (1875). Early in the year, information reached the Porte that a serious outbreak would take place in Bulgaria in the month of April, and that the districts of Philippopolis, Eski-Zagra, and Tirnova would be the scene of the explosion. The information which was very detailed and supported by evidence as to its accuracy, was accompanied by an earnest request by the authorities of the threatened districts that a body of regular troops should be despatched to the spot to inspire confidence in the inhabitants and to protect the lives and property of peaceful citizens. General Ignatieff again interfered, and in the capacity of *amicus curiæ*, insisted that the presence of regular troops would only inflame the passions of the population and precipitate a crisis. Mahmoud Nedim allowed himself to be persuaded by the Russian Ambassador, and persisted in turning a deaf ear to the reiterated requests of the local authorities for the despatch of a regular force.

Three weeks before the appointed day (16th April 1875) the anticipated rising took place. It was accompanied by exactly the same incidents that had characterised every previous rising that obeyed a *mot d'ordre* from outside. The armed bands fell on the first Mussulmans they met with, and massacred them all, regardless of age or sex, with the obvious aim of provoking reprisals that should play into the hands of the enemies of

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Turkey.[1] These reprisals did, in fact, take place, and were, no doubt, of a sanguinary and wholesale character. It is not intended here to defend or condemn the atrocities that took place on this occasion; but human nature being what it is, and the provocation endured by the Mussulman population being taken into account, and due allowance being made for the contagion of passion and panic, it is no great wonder if scenes were enacted in Bulgaria that have marked revolution and *jacqueries* in all ages in every part of the world; and perhaps still less if a confessedly and bitterly hostile Press in Europe denounced "methods of barbarism" with little sifting of evidence and with much dramatic exaggeration. Party spirit has occasionally not scrupled to apply exactly the same terms without much reason to the methods of warfare of its own regular troops. One fact was clearly and conclusively established by the various commissions subsequently sent to prosecute enquiries on the spot, viz., that not a single instance occurred of an unarmed Christian being injured, or of a Christian village being destroyed whose inhabitants had not actually risen in armed rebellion. Fanaticism, in the strict acceptation of the term, is not so discriminating.

Matters had now come to such a pass that a general cataclysm was to be apprehended. Bulgaria, Montenegro and Herzegovina in flames, Servia arming to the teeth under the supervision of competent foreign officers, Roumania preparing to move in the same direction, a bankrupt treasury at home, a Grand Vizier whose sole resource seemed to be in the promises and counsels of a perfidious ambassador, the arch-enemy of his country, and a sovereign wholly unconscious, or careless, of the condition of the empire, provided his own extravagant caprices were gratified—such was the aspect of affairs in Turkey in the spring of 1876. But that was not all.

[1] See Appendix—"Bulgarian Atrocities."

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Under the spur of public opinion, and moved by secret springs in the same direction, European diplomacy was meddling with the matter. Rulers of State and masters of many legions were holding meetings to discuss the situation in the East, and "Notes" and "Memorandums" were flying about the Chancellories of Europe. The diplomatic outlook was quite as menacing as the situation at home was critical.

It was in such a condition of affairs that counsel was being taken in Midhat's Konak, among a few patriots who did not yet despair of their country, as to the best mode of saving the empire. But before the events that led up to the deposition of the Sultan Abdul Aziz are detailed, it will be useful to cast a glance at what was passing in the diplomatic world in Europe.

The first and most important event in this respect, inasmuch as it was the key of all that subsequently occurred, was the meeting of the Czar and the Emperor of Austria at Reichstadt, 8th July 1876.[1]

The outcome of that interview, with respect to Turkey, is no secret to-day, but twenty-five years ago it was certainly ignored in London, otherwise the negotiations that took place between the English and Austrian Governments relative to the contingency of an armed intervention in the Turko-Russian War—carried on through the Austrian Embassy in London in the significant absence of the Ambassador, which went so far as to discuss the terms of a guaranteed war loan—would certainly not have occurred. The acumen of the English Government on this occasion would seem to have been somewhat at fault, and the information that came to it from Vienna strangely unreliable; for it acted, throughout negotiations extending over two years, in undisturbed reliance on the *bonâ fides* of the Austrian Chancellor's assurances,

[1] See Appendix.

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and apparently in a secure trust in the force of his Magyar prejudices with respect to Russia. The fact is patent to-day—and was well known at Berlin, and was not ignored in Paris—that Austria was, if not the actual instigator of the Herzegovinian rising—which is by no means certain—the Power that was determined to profit by it, and that her whole policy and diplomatic action with respect to the events that were taking place in the South-East of Europe was governed by this determination.

The turning-point of Austrian policy with respect to Turkey has already been indicated: the abandonment by England of Austria's interests on the Danube left her free, or even compelled her to have regard to what she considered her own exclusive interests; and the meeting of the two Emperors, at the breaking out of the Herzegovinian disturbances, was the confirmation of this change of policy.

Two assurances seem to have been given by the Czar at this now historic interview. First, that whatever might be the outcome of events in Turkey, he would not seek for Russia any territorial aggrandisement in Europe; and secondly, with regard to Bosnia and Herzegovina, that in the contingency of the continuance of disturbances there he would not oppose the occupation of those provinces by Austria if sanctioned by the rest of Europe.

If this agreement had not been a secret one, and the terms of it had been known or suspected in London, does any one imagine that events would have followed the course they did, or that the "Notes" and "Memorandums" coming from Vienna and Berlin would have been taken seriously by the English Cabinet? The pact between the two Emperors, sealed at Reichstadt, was quite as much at the expense of England in Asia as of Turkey in Europe. It was a practical corollary of Prince Bismarck's avowed Eastern policy.

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There is only an academical interest now in pointing out the *rôle* that the personality of Count Andrassy and his reputed Magyar sentiments played in all these transactions, and it is not necessary to interrupt the course of this narrative by dwelling on them.

After the Andrassy Memorandum had prepared the Cabinets of Europe for some sort of diplomatic interference in the affairs of Turkey, and familiarised them with the idea, the natural course of events in the Turkish Empire did the rest. The ball set going at Vienna was taken up at Berlin. The comparatively colourless diplomatic Memorandum concocted in the first-named capital was followed by a far more coercive Note emanating from the latter. The former contained recommendations, the latter added external sanctions to them. The policy intended to be pursued with reference to Turkey was contained in germ in this remarkable "Note," and the diplomatic strategy to be employed was herein clearly revealed. The "Conference," which was to impose the conditions and insist on the sanction, was already on the *tapis*, and formed the subject of an interchange of views between the various European governments; and it was, as it were, under the shadow of this menace to the integrity and independence of the country that the friends of Midhat now hastened their deliberations.

As early as the winter of 1875, Midhat, with a view of profiting by the lights, and seeking the advice of the eminent diplomatist who represented the Court of St James at Constantinople, paid a visit to Sir Henry Elliot, the purpose of which can best be described in the words of the Ambassador himself.[1]

"In the beginning of December 1875, I was informed by one of Midhat's partisans, a Pasha who had filled some of the highest offices of the State, that the object of his

[1] *Nineteenth Century*, February 1888.

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party was to obtain a 'Constitution.' This was more than a year before its promulgation, when it was declared to have been invented only to defeat the Conference then sitting at Constantinople. . . . A few days later Midhat himself called upon me and explained his views more fully than he had ever done before, though I was acquainted with their general tenor. The Empire, he said, was being rapidly brought to destruction; corruption had reached a pitch that it had never before attained; the service of the State was starved, while untold millions were poured into the Palace, and the provinces were being ruined by the uncontrolled exertions of governors who purchased their appointments at the Palace, and nothing could save the country but a complete change of system. The only remedy that he could perceive, lay, first, in securing a control over the sovereign by making the Ministers—and especially as regarded the finances—responsible to a national popular Assembly; and secondly in making this Assembly truly national, by doing away with all distinctions of classes and religions, and by placing the Christians on a footing of entire equality with the Mussulmans; thirdly, by decentralisation and by the establishment of provincial control over the governors. It must surely be admitted that these were enlightened and statesmanlike views, deserving of every encouragement. . . . He dwelt repeatedly on the value that the sympathy of the British nation would be to the reformers, and on the manner in which his countrymen were now looking to England as the example they hoped to follow. I told him in reply that I could not doubt that measures framed upon the lines he had laid down must command the approval and ensure the good wishes of every Englishman who, like myself, had faith in the advantages of constitutional checks upon arbitrary power. I gave him this assurance confidently and in good faith; for certainly the very last thing that I anticipated was that those who in this country make the greatest parade of their devotion to constitutional principles would be the first to heap contumely upon men who were trying to introduce it into theirs, and to hold up their proposals to ridicule. . . ."

The first of the many incidents that soon after this conversation began to follow each other closely, took

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place on the 10th May 1876, when an assemblage of several thousand Softas stopped Prince Izzeddine, the Sultan's eldest son, on his way to the Seraskierat (Ministry of War), desiring him to return to the Palace, and to inform the Sultan that they demanded the dismissal of Mahmoud Nedim, the Grand Vizier and of Hassan Fehmi Effendi, the Sheik-ul-Islam. The Sultan did not venture to reject the demand. Mahmoud and Hassan Fehmi were dismissed, the latter being replaced by Hassan Hairullah Effendi, who enjoyed a high and exceptional reputation for learning and enlightenment. Mehemet Rushdi Pasha, an old man universally respected, was named Grand Vizier; and as he insisted on Midhat joining his Cabinet (although holding no specific office), it was believed that he would be the guiding spirit, and general satisfaction was felt. Sir Henry Elliot proceeds to say:

"This general satisfaction did not last long. The Sultan quickly showed his determination to resist all reforms by appointing to high posts several of the worst of the old school of Pashas, and it then became so evident to me that an attempt to depose him would certainly very shortly be made, that on the 25th May I put my conviction on record in a despatch in which I wrote that the word 'Constitution' was in every mouth; that the Softas, representing the intelligent public opinion of the Capital, knowing themselves to be supported by the bulk of the Nation—Christian as well as Mahomedan—would not, I believed, relax their efforts till they obtained it, and that should the Sultan refuse to grant it, an attempt to depose him appeared almost inevitable; that texts from the Koran were circulated proving to the faithful that the form of Government sanctioned by it was properly democratic, and that the absolute authority now wielded by the Sovereign was an usurpation of the rights of the people and not sanctioned by the Sacred Law; and both texts and precedents were appealed to to show that allegiance was not due to a Sovereign who neglected the interests of the State. The disaffection, I said, now ran through every class, and from the Pashas down to the

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porters in the streets and the boatmen on the Bosphorus, no one thought any longer of concealing his opinions. . . . Within a week after my reports were written, the deposition had been effected. . . ."

The two moving spirits in the deposition of Sultan Abdul Aziz were undoubtedly Midhat Pasha and Hussein Avni Pasha, the Minister of War (*seraskier*). The latter, a thorough soldier and a sterling patriot, distinguished for the great energy and decision of his character as well as the impetuosity of his temper, had occupied the highest military posts in the country, and had been repeatedly exiled from Constantinople by the Sultan. He was particularly feared and disliked by Mahmoud Nedim, who had procured his banishment each time that he had been made Grand Vizier. Although not sharing all Midhat's constitutional views and professing more confidence in the efficacy of the sword than in the saving grace of popular institutions, he had lent a willing and energetic support to his colleague's views as to the indisputable necessity of deposing the Sultan as a preliminary to any attempted amelioration in the condition of the State.

As soon as the final resolution of Ministers was arrived at, and before any commencement of execution could be given to it, it was indispensable to obtain a *Fetva* (authoritative decree) of the Sheik-ul-Islam, Hassan Hairullah, the highest authority and mouthpiece of the Sacred Law, in order to give legal validity to the act of deposition. Accordingly the following *Fetva* was issued for the deposition :—

"If the Chief of the Faithful gives proof of mental derangement ; if he displays ignorance of State matters ; if he employs the public revenues for his personal expenditure, beyond what the Nation and the State can support ; if he introduces confusion into political and spiritual concerns,

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and if his continuance in power becomes injurious to the nation, may he be deposed?"

Answer: "The Cheri pronounces 'Yes.'

"Signed by the humble

"HASSAN HAIRULLAH,

"To whom God grant His indulgence.

"*Djemaziel Evel*, 1293, *Hegira*."
(*30th May* 1876.)

Armed with this *Fetva*, Ministers decided on the immediate execution of their plans, the details of which, it was agreed, should be left to the Grand Vizier, to Midhat, and to the Minister of War.

There was a slight divergence of views between Midhat and the Seraskier with reference to the form of procedure which should accompany the deposition. Hussein Avni inclined to a simple military *pronunciamento*, whereas Midhat wished to give the consecration of popular sanction to the act. For this purpose he proposed that the Softas and the population of Stamboul should be convoked *en masse* to the Noure-Osmanieh Mosque, where they should set forth the griefs of the nation and demand a change of *régime*; and that on this demand being refused or ignored, they should proceed at once to the execution of the decree of deposition. The majority of Ministers inclined to this latter method of proceeding; but a circumstance occurred which necessitated a change of plans and determined the abandonment of the proposal for a popular demonstration.

The 31st May was chosen for the execution of the plan agreed upon. On the eve of that day information reached Midhat from a woman of the Palace that the Sultan had had wind of the affair, and that the whole plot was about to be discovered. This was corroborated by the fact that twice that same day Hussein Avni had been peremptorily summoned to the Palace, although on the

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first summons he had pleaded illness as a reason for disregarding it.

It was decided thereupon by the Ministers to anticipate the hour fixed upon, and to proceed at once with the execution of their design.

At midnight accordingly, of the 30th of May, Mehemet Rushdi and Midhat, accompanied each by a single attendant carrying a lamp, proceeded to Sirkedji to embark on a *caïque*[1] for Pachalimani on the Bosphorus, the residence of Hussein Avni. It was a pitch-dark night with rain falling in torrents, and it was with some difficulty that they reached the place of rendezvous. Here they found Hussein Avni anxiously waiting for them, and after a hurried interview in which the final dispositions were made, they separated to their respective posts. Hussein Avni started for the palace of Dolma-Bagtche, whilst Rushdi and Midhat proceeded to the Seraskierat.

It had been decided that the Ministers and high civil and military dignitaries should assemble at the War Office and await the arrival of Prince Murad, whom Hussein Avni had undertaken to conduct there in person; and that as soon as he should arrive, the proclamation and investiture of the Prince as the new Sultan should take place. It was further arranged that immediately on the arrival of the Prince a bonfire should be lit on the tower of the Seraskierat, as a signal to the fleet of what was taking place, and thereupon a Royal salute should be fired by Kaisserli Ahmed's ironclads, to announce to the whole city the commencement of a new reign.

Hussein Avni, proceeding in the direction of the Palace, was, according to preconcerted arrangement, met by Suleiman Pasha, to whom the delicate task of executing the measures necessary to be taken at the Palace had been entrusted.

[1] Boat.

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Suleiman Pasha, marshal in the army and director-in-chief of the school of military cadets at Pancaldi, the trusted lieutenant and right-hand man of Hussein Avni, himself a strong partisan of Midhat Pasha and the young hope of the Reform Party, was the very man to carry out an operation requiring careful preparation and unflinching resolution for its successful execution.

The troops in the barracks of Tash-Kishla and Kumuch-Suyou had already received their orders from Redif Pasha, the commander of the *corps d'armée* of Constantinople, and had been so posted as to blockade all approaches by land. The fleet of ironclads under the personal command of Kaiseli Ahmed, the captain Pasha, had taken the same precautions by sea, so that nothing remained but to disarm the sentinels and *corps de garde* along the immediate approaches to the Palace. Suleiman, taking with him a selected body of military students from Pancaldi, under the command of Ahmed Bey (colonel) and Bedry and Rifat Beys (captains), after successfully performing, without disturbance but not without some opposition, the delicate operation of disarmament, hastened to the apartments of Prince Murad. Although the Prince had been made aware of the intentions of the Ministers, and had acquiesced in their general arrangements, it had been found impossible to acquaint him with the change of date resolved upon. He, therefore, fearing some surprise or treachery, hesitated for some time before he could be induced to comply with Suleiman's urgent request that he should immediately join Hussein Avni, who was waiting for him in a carriage at the gates of the Palace to drive him to the Seraskierat, where his proclamation and investiture as the new sovereign were to take place. At one moment it looked as if the solemn drama about to be enacted would have to be played out with the part of the "Prince of Denmark" omitted.

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Having surmounted this unexpected difficulty and despatched Murad on his way to the Seraskierat, Suleiman proceeded to discharge the second and more distasteful part of the mandate confided to him. Making his way to the Imperial apartments, and overcoming the hesitation of the attendants by presenting an order signed by all the Ministers, he peremptorily demanded to be immediately led into the presence of the Sultan. The demand being at last complied with, he proceeded to communicate to Abdul Aziz the justification of his intrusion, and read to him the *fetva* of the deposition. Whilst the Sultan and Suleiman were engaged in parleying, the big guns of Ahmed's ironclads were heard booming in the distance. Abdul Aziz at once took in the import of the firing, and from that moment yielded to the inevitable. He prepared to comply with the order communicated to him to quit the Palace of Dolma-Bagtche for that of Top-Kapeu, which had been assigned as a residence for him.

The new Sultan confirmed all his Ministers in their posts, addressing the following letter to the Porte:—

To my Grand Vizier and very patriotic Mehemet Rushdi Pasha—

"By the favour of the Almighty and the will of my subjects, we have ascended the throne of our ancestors, and by reason of your patriotism and ability in the discharge of your duties as Grand Vizier, we confirm you and all your colleagues in your former posts. The numerous difficulties experienced for some time past both in our domestic affairs and foreign relations, have produced uneasiness in the public mind, and caused detriment to the material and territorial interests of the country. The necessity of amending this state of things and of adopting remedial measures such as shall insure the happiness and secure the confidence of our subjects, imposes itself imperatively upon us; and to effect these purposes, it is absolutely necessary to organise the administration of

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the State on a basis of stability and justice. Our exclusive attention will be directed to this end, and for this purpose we desire that our Ministers, after due deliberation, shall submit to us for our approbation their views on the means by which, whilst respecting the laws of the Cheri and of Justice, the organisation of our Empire in accordance with the wants and requirements of our people can be effected, with the view of procuring to all our subjects alike, without distinction or restriction, the completest liberty compatible with order; and, moreover, that our Ministers shall communicate to us their views on the application of such just laws and regulations as shall be calculated to consolidate and unify the national and patriotic sentiments of all our subjects. It is clear, moreover, that in order to obtain these objects, it is indispensable to reorganise the Council of State, the Ministers of Justice, as well as of public Institutions and of the Finances, as well as other departments of State; and it is, moreover, evident that one of the principal reforms of all will consist in establishing on a sound foundation the financial situation of the Empire, and in taking steps that no expenditure shall be tolerated that shall not have been provided for by the Budget of the State, by which measures it may be hoped that public credit and confidence will be restored. In order to help to obtain this result, we hereby diminish our Civil list by the sum of £T300,000, and surrender to the State the coal-mines of Heraclia and the other mines and manufactories appertaining to the Civil list; and we recommend that like economies shall be effected in all the various branches of the administration, so as to establish an equilibrium in our finances. Our liveliest desire is for a continuance of intimate relations with all the friendly Powers, by the strictest observance of treaty obligations, and all our efforts will be directed to this end, and we pray the Almighty to crown them with success.

"9 *Djemaziel Evel*, 1293, *Hegira*."
(*2nd June* 1876.)

Besides the retention of their portfolios by all the Ministers, Kemal Bey (the best known and most distinguished poet and litterateur of Turkey) and Zia Bey (equally celebrated as a poet and patriot) were appointed as his private secretaries, and Sadullah Bey (well known

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for his liberal sympathies and opinions) made chief of the Sultan's secretariat—important guarantees for the smooth working of the machinery of State, and security against the revival of the old pernicious intrigues of the Palace against the Ministers of the Porte. Murad had, moreover, undertaken to promulgate the Constitution prepared by Midhat and his colleagues at the earliest date compatible with the despatch of urgent public business.

So far everything seemed to favour the Reformers. A revolution of the most fundamental character, involving the destruction of autocratic power in Turkey, and carrying the promise of a Constitution which would lay the foundations at any rate of stable government in the country, effected not only without bloodshed or disturbance of any kind, but with the assent and approval of all classes and creeds in the land, and with a new sovereign on the throne known sincerely to share the views of his Ministers and the aspirations of his people, all this seemed to ensure the prospect of healing the wounds of the much afflicted land of the Osmanli, and of opening up a new era of progress and prosperity in the East.

But suddenly a cloud, not bigger than a man's hand, lowered over the destinies of the country, and from this time the stars in their courses fought against Turkey, and violently set back the date of the promised era of prosperity.

On the eventful night of the 30th-31st May, during the drive with Murad to the Seraskierat, Hussein Avni had perceived that the Prince was suffering from violent nervous excitement, and these symptoms were still further accentuated in the return journey to the Palace of Dolma-Bagtche after the ceremony of investiture was over—so much so that Midhat Pasha, who accompanied him, thought it prudent to remain in the Palace, without quitting it, for three days. The physicians called in

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consultation did not at first take a grave view of the case, and sanguine hopes were entertained that, in a short time, by pursuing the regimen of repose and hygiene recommended by these authorities, Sultan Murad would rapidly recover his health and be able to discharge the duties incumbent on him. Dr Lamsdorf of Vienna, the celebrated specialist, made a very favourable diagnosis of the case. A happy issue of this most unfortunate and inopportune malady was now generally hoped for and expected, when two startling events occurred in rapid succession, each seriously aggravating and affecting the Sultan Murad's nervous condition of health, and together fatally compromising the hope of rapid recovery.

The first of these tragedies referred to was enacted in the Palace of Tcheragan, five days after the dethronement of the late Sultan. Abdul Aziz, whose imperious temper could ill brook the change of destiny that had overtaken him, had already made one or two unsuccessful attempts, which were with difficulty thwarted, to throw himself out of the windows of the Palace. On the morning of the 5th June, he asked for a pair of scissors with which to trim his beard. On the attendants demurring to comply with this request, the Valide Sultan ordered the scissors to be given to her son. Shortly after this, the ladies of her suite, looking out of a window of a corridor that commanded a view on the room occupied by the late Sultan, saw him sitting quietly in an armchair with his back turned to the window; but shortly afterwards, perceiving that his head had dropped on his lap, they ran to the door and tried to open it. Finding it locked, and fearing a catastrophe, they ran screaming to the Valide Sultan and informed her of what they suspected. Orders being given to break into the room, they found Abdul Aziz sitting in the posture already described, and in a pool of blood flowing from two wounds in his arms, evidently

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caused by the scissors, which had fallen beside him on the floor. The physicians, who were hastily summoned, could only confirm the apprehension that life was extinct, and the Ministers, immediately apprised of the fact of the tragedy, ordered an immediate examination of the body to be made by all the available medical men in Constantinople, hastily summoned to draw up an official report on the subject. Seventeen medical men of all nationalities, comprising all the most distinguished in the city and in the Embassies of the great Powers, signed a unanimous report to the effect that death was undoubtedly due to suicide, and handed the following certificate :—

"The year 1876 A.D., on the 23rd of May, O.S., the 4th of June, N.S., or the year of the Hegira, the 11th of the month of Djemazi-el-ewel 1293, Sunday, at 11 o'clock A.M., we, the undersigned doctors of medicine, namely, Marco Pasha, Nouri Pasha, Julius Millingen, Caratheodori, Sotto, Dickson, Marrcin, Nouridjian, Spadare, Vitalis, S. Spagnolo, Marc Markel, Jatropoulo, Miltiadi Bey, Abdinour Effendi, Mustafa Effendi, Servet Bey, Mehmed Bey and Jacques de Castro, being summoned by the ministry by order of His Imperial Majesty to ascertain the cause of the death of the ex-Sultan Abdul Aziz, proceeded to the guard-house situated near the Imperial Palace of Tcheragan. There we were ushered into a chamber on the ground floor and found a body lying on a mattress on the floor. The body was covered with a new white linen cloth. On removing this cloth we recognised the ex-Sultan Abdul Aziz. All the parts of the body were cold and bloodless, pale, or covered with coagulated blood. The corpse was not rigid, the eyelids were partially unclosed, the corneæ were slightly opaque, the mouth partly open. Linen cloths, soaked in blood covered the arms and legs. On lifting the linen coverings on the arms we discovered a gash near the joint of the left arm five centimetres long and three centimetres deep. The edges of the wound were hacked and irregular. The direction of the wound was from above to below and from inside to outside. The veins of this region were

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cut, and the cubital artery at its emerging point was three-fourths severed. At the joint of the right arm we discovered a wound, slightly oblique, also hacked, two centimetres long and one centimetre deep. On this side the wounds were only in the smaller veins; the arteries were intact.

"We were shown a pair of scissors ten centimetres long, very sharp, one point of which bore a small lateral projection near its summit. The scissors were stained with blood, and we were told that the ex-Sultan Abdul Aziz had with these scissors inflicted upon himself the wounds above described.

"We then proceeded to the residence of the late Sultan, where we were ushered into a large chamber looking on to the sea. There we found in the corner of a sofa, placed near a window, a pool of blood spread over that article of furniture, and on the matting of the floor a great quantity of coagulated blood in one mass, and further several stains spread over the room.

"From what precedes we are unanimously of opinion:—

"1. That the death of the ex-Sultan Abdul Aziz was caused by the loss of blood produced by the wounds of the blood-vessels at the joints of the arms.

"2. That the instrument shown to us could certainly produce such wounds.

"3. That the direction and nature of the wounds, together with the instrument which is said to have produced them, lead us to conclude that suicide had been committed.

"In witness whereof we have accordingly drawn up and signed the present minute of proceedings at the guard-house of Tcheragan on the day, month and year aforesaid.

"*Signed:*

"Dr Marco, Nouri, A. Sotto, Physician attached to the Imperial and Royal Embassy of Austria-Hungary; Dr Spagnolo, Marc Markel, Jatropoulo, Abdinour, Servet, J. de Castro, A. Marroin, Julius Millingen, C. Caratheodori; E. D. Dickson, Physician of the British Embassy; Dr O. Vitalis, Physician of the Sanitary Board; Dr E. Spadare, J. Nouridjian, Miltiadi Bey, Mustafa, Mehmed."

The body was transferred to Top-Kapou and buried in the mausoleum of Sultan Mahmoud.

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Ten days after the tragedy at the Palace of Tcheragan the news of which had deeply affected Sultan Murad, another quickly followed, in some respects of a still more startling character, and calculated to prostrate still further a mind already unhinged.

A Circassian captain, formerly aide-de-camp of the Sultan Abdul Aziz, one Hassan by name, on whom certain suspicion of violent intentions rested, had been ordered to Bagdad, and on his showing signs of recalcitrancy, he was imprisoned for insubordination by orders of Hussein Avni, the Minister of War. Feigning submission, he was released after two days' detention. On the 15th June, during a Cabinet Council which was being held at the house of Midhat Pasha, and at which all the Ministers were present, Tcherkess Hassan, armed with no less than six revolvers, forcing the consigne without much difficulty, managed to penetrate into the room where the Council was sitting, and advancing straight up to Hussein Avni, discharged a barrel of a revolver at him, and turning sharply on Reshid Pasha, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, shot him dead on the spot. The Minister of Marine, Kaisserli Ahmed, threw himself on the assassin and tried to disarm him, but he was immediately stabbed with a poniard that Hassan carried in his left hand. Hussein Avni, although severely wounded, managed to make his way to the staircase, but Hassan, following him, struck at him furiously in the neck with his dagger and despatched him. Returning to the Council room he discharged his revolvers promiscuously all around him, smashing the chandelier suspended in the middle of the room, and consequently plunging the room into darkness. It was this that probably saved the lives of the remaining Ministers, for Kaisserli Ahmed, though wounded, and Mehemet Rushdi, and Halid succeeded in escaping into an adjoining boudoir, where

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they barricaded the door against their furious assailant, who, having despatched the War Minister, seemed chiefly bent on wreaking vengeance on the Minister of Marine. Midhat escaped by a miracle, and by slipping off his coat, the sleeve of which he left in the hand of Hassan who had seized it in the darkness. One of Midhat's servants, Ahmed Aga, on hearing the firing, had rushed into the room and tried to seize the assassin from behind, but Hassan turned sharply on him and shot him dead. The same fate attended Chukri Bey, the aide-de-camp of the Minister of Marine, who also rushed in to the rescue. At last a guard of *gendarmerie* appeared on the scene, and a regular fusilade ensued between the Circassian at bay and the *gendarmes* reinforced by a picket of soldiers; it was only then, after a regular pitched battle, that this determined criminal was at length overpowered and seized.

He was very soon afterwards tried, and hanged in due course, stoutly denying to the last that he had any accomplices.

The effect of these compound tragedies on the mind of the Sultan Murad was disastrous. His recovery, sanguine hopes of which had been held out by Dr Lamsdorf, the famous specialist summoned from Vienna to give his opinion on the state of the Sultan's health, seemed destined to be indefinitely postponed. Two parties, holding distinct views on the situation and the manner it should be dealt with, now showed themselves among the Ministers and the high Court officials. Mehemet Rushdi especially, the old experienced vizier and the majority of Ministers well aware of the favourable disposition of Sultan Murad towards the cause of reform, and very averse to taking a plunge in the dark, leant to the opinion that patience should be exercised and reasonable time given for the recovery of the Sultan's health.

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But another and very active party had in the meantime been formed, of which Damad Mahmoud Djelaleddin Pasha (the Sultan's brother-in-law) was the moving spirit, and which included, together with some high Palace officials, one or two of the influential marshals, such as Redif Pasha, the commander of the Constantinople *corps d'armée* and under the influence of Damad Mahmoud Djelaleddin. This party—as far as it could be said to have been based on any particular political opinions, and not on the simple ground of ambition and the desire to exercise a preponderating influence in the future *régime*—consisted of the men who had acquiesced, and even participated, in the dethronement of the late Sultan, but did not share, and some of them were even bitterly opposed to, the constitutional views advocated by Midhat and the reforming party. Borne along by the current of events which they would have been impotent to resist, they would have constituted a helpless minority in the State without power or influence, if they had had to do with a reforming Sultan on the throne, a palace where men like Zia Bey, and Kemal Bey were the guiding spirits, and the party of reform in strong possession of the Porte. The prospect, however, of being able to change the occupant of the throne and place their own candidate upon it afforded them the precious opportunity of upsetting the whole edifice of reform, of themselves seizing the chief power of the State, and turning the revolution that had been accomplished to their own exclusive advantage. It was less a victory of reaction than a triumph of ambition.

Damad Mahmoud Djelaleddin was a very ignorant and uncultivated man, and though careless and without a conviction in respect to political opinions, he enjoyed the reputation of being neither careless nor indifferent with respect to matters of personal or pecuniary concern to himself. On the other hand, he was endowed with

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great, almost brutal, determination of character, and was utterly reckless as to the means of carrying out his ends. His position of Damad (brother-in-law to the Sultan) gave him great influence in the Palace, and at the same time secured him weight in the Councils of the State. He was the very soul of the anti-reform conspiracy.

Having described Damad Mahmoud Djelaleddin, the character of his lieutenant, Redif Pasha, can be described in a sentence: he was Damad Mahmoud *in petto*. Whatever qualities distinguished the master were conspicuous in the lieutenant, and only in a less degree, inasmuch as he was physically of a somewhat less robust nature. He had, like Mahmoud, lent himself with all the weight of his military position to the dethronement of Abdul Aziz, but he viewed with an evil eye the advance of reform, and still more the triumph of the reformers.

These two men practically constituted the central power of the conspiracy, for those who co-operated with them were scarcely admitted into the inner councils or secret plans of the Duumvirate, although themselves the willing participators in the conspiracy.

Among them was Djevdet Pasha, Minister of Justice, who, during all the stirring events of the Vizierate of Mehemet Rushdi, had been lying low in the Cabinet waiting for the opportune moment to show his colours and take part in the overthrow of the ministry.

Whilst enumerating the instruments of Mahmoud's ambition, it would be impossible to omit the names of two other men who, although they had not yet emerged into the notoriety which they were soon to enjoy, were indispensable tools of Mahmoud's ambition, and powerfully contributed to the success of his plans. These were the two Saïds. The one was brother in-law of Mahmoud, and

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destined for the important post of first aide-de-camp to the Sultan Abdul Hamid. He was generally known as "Ingless Saïd Pasha," for his having been educated at Woolwich, and though entirely wanting in initiative or political convictions, was naturally of a frank and loyal disposition, not deficient in energy, and an invaluable coadjutor in carrying out the views of his brother-in-law. With Redif Pasha he formed the third member of the Triumvirate, which Mahmoud intended should, during the succeeding reign, govern the country. The other Saïd, of whom a great deal more will have to be said hereafter, was known, on account of his small stature, as "Saïd Kutchouk" (small), and when he reaches the dignity of Pasha, it will be necessary to distinguish him from the other Saïd by this appellation. He was supposed to be the *âme damnée* of Mahmoud, especially by Mahmoud himself, who destined him for the important confidential post of First Secretary to the Sultan.

Without any doubt, Damad's plans were well conceived, and his net was well spread. The post of Vice-Sultan he reserved for himself.

Behind these were marshalled the whole phalanx of Reaction, and the Konak of Mahmoud become the Cave of Adullam of all the malcontents.

The means of action were not wanting to the conspirators in this respect; indeed, the material to their hand was only too abundant. A sovereign of unsound mind is not recognised by the Ottoman Constitution. The girding of the Padishah with the sword of Osman, as an essential part of the ceremony of investiture, was to the Ottoman sovereigns what the sacred oil of Rheims was to the kings of France, and this ceremony had not taken place.

No Sultan, moreover, had ever before absented himself from attendance at the mosque on Friday, and the Selam-

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lik that follows. The public anxiety and excitement on the subject were genuine and universal. Public affairs, too, were suffering: the Constitution was, in a double sense, suspended; the new Constitution could not be promulgated, and the old Constitution, such as it was, could not be worked; the mainspring of the machinery of State was deranged. Foreign diplomacy, too, was beginning to take an active part in the matter. The ambassadors and envoys from foreign States were asking to whom, and when, they could present their credentials. The Russian Embassy—that seemed to have better information relative to Prince Hamid's character than Ministers themselves—was particularly persistent and active in this respect. It was evident that the crisis could not be indefinitely prolonged.

In these circumstances, it was resolved by Ministers that Midhat should go to Muslou-Oglou, where Prince Hamid, heir presumptive to the throne, resided, in order to ascertain by a personal interview with him whether Ministers could rely on his co-operation to carry out the important reforms that they had in hand, should it become absolutely necessary to remove Murad from the throne, and in that event, to agree to certain clear and definite stipulations with the Prince as conditions of their support.

These stipulations were the following:—

1. To promulgate without delay the new Constitution.

2. To act in matters of State only with the advice of his responsible advisers.

3. To appoint Zia Bey and Kemal Bey his private secretaries, and to make Sadullah Bey the head of the Palace Secretariat.

The importance attached by Midhat and Rushdi to this last condition was very great. It afforded a guarantee against those intrigues of the Palace which had shipwrecked so many schemes of reform, and prevented, so far as was possible, a renewal of that mute opposition between

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the Palace and the Porte which had existed for centuries, and had paralysed the efforts of so many Ministers.

At this historical interview at Muslou-Oglou Prince Hamid evidently "played a deep game" with Midhat Pasha. He promised all and more than all that was asked of him. He pretended to opinions more advanced than the most advanced of his Ministers, and in favour of even a more democratic Constitution than the one elaborated. The other condition he accepted without demur.

On receiving these clear and emphatic declarations, Midhat returned to Stamboul and reported the result of his interview to the assembled Ministers, who thereupon resolved to take the decisive step and put Prince Hamid on the throne in the place of his brother Murad.

As on the occasion of the dethronement of the Sultan Abdul Aziz, it was necessary to obtain a *Fetva* from the Sheik-ul-Islam to the effect that the contemplated step was in accordance with the Sacred Law. Mehemet Rushdi thereupon demanded an official report from six principal physicians in Constantinople—of whom four belonged to the Embassies of the Great Powers—who, after examination of Murad, handed to him the following certificates :—

"On the 31st of the month August, 1876, Chaban II: 1293 Hegira, we have made a report on the health of His Majesty Sultan Murad, and come to certain conclusions which we hereby confirm, and add thereto the following opinion, viz. that even should the Sultan Murad after a long lapse of time, contrary to expectation, recover his intellectual faculties, these can never recover their normal condition."

"(Signed) CASTRO.

AKIF.

DICKSON, *Physician to English Embassy.*

MARROIN, *Physician to French Embassy.*

MUHLIG, *Physician to German Embassy.*

SOTTO, *Physician to Austro-Hungarian Embassy.*"

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Thereupon Mehemet Rushdi made a speech to the people gathered together to hear the report of these physicians at the Palace of Top-Kapou.

"Our sovereign, the Emperor Murad," he said, "has been enabled to reign for only twelve days, but during that time he has been afflicted with an illness which, in spite of all the efforts of human science, has shown no amendment. His intellectual faculties are in a state of great feebleness, and the physicians pronounce them incurable. Nevertheless we have waited for the expiration of the legal delay, and this delay has now expired. This is the sum total of the truth of the matter. Let us be informed of what, under such circumstances, the law of the Cheri dictates."

The assembled crowd expressed its sense of the justice of these words, and the Sheik-ul-Islam, Hassan Hairullah, gave the following *Fetva*:—

"If the Commander of the Faithful is suffering from mental alienation and if the exercise of his function is thereby rendered impracticable, can he be deposed?

"Answer: The Cheri says 'Yes.'

"(Signed) HASSAN HAIRULLAH,
"To whom God grant His indulgence.

"12 *Chaban* 1293, *Hegira*."
(*1st September* 1876.)

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CHAPTER IV

ABDUL HAMID SULTAN

THE act of dethronement of Sultan Murad V. was now accomplished. On Thursday, 1st September 1876, Prince Hamid, surrounded by all the great Civil and Military dignitaries of the State, descended the Grand Rue of Pera on horseback, on his way to Top-Kapou at Stamboul. The people thronged in large crowds to see the procession, but dazed by the series of dramatic events that were so rapidly succeeding one another, they viewed the spectacle with silence and without enthusiasm. There seemed a feeling of anxiety in the air as of the prescience of future evils.

From Stamboul the Prince passed in a State *caïque* to the Palace of Dolma-Bagtche. Monday, the 15th of the month Chaban, was fixed for the reception of the Biat (first ceremony of the investiture), and on that day a deputation of notabilities of Finance, accompanied by the chiefs of the five non-Mussulman community, headed by Jean Lorando, presented the Sultan elect with an address of congratulation in the name of the city of Galata, and to this the Sultan made the following reply:—

"I thank you for your congratulations; I have only one desire, and that is the progress of our country and peace for all our subjects. They will perceive by the logic of facts the fulfilment of the promise of the reforms made to them. They, too, on their part, must, in order to enjoy these privileges, give proof of the strict observance of the duties incumbent on them."

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To his Ministers he made a short speech, counselling union and agreement among themselves as the condition and symbol of union among all the subjects of the empire, and "counselled and ordered" them to prove their union by their acts.

The following Thursday, 18th of the month Chaban, was fixed for the great ceremony of investiture. On the morning of that day Abdul Hamid embarked in a *caïque* for Eyoub, the suburb on the Golden Horn, where the sword of Osman and the other sacred relics are kept, and on his passage thither he was saluted by the guns of the fleet anchored there, and the shout of the sailors manning the yards, "Padishahim tchok Yasha!"

After the important ceremony here was over, and the investiture of the new Padishah was thus completed, he proceeded, according to usage, to the mausoleum of Selim I., the founder of the Ottoman Caliphate, and thence to the mausoleum of Abdul Medjid, his father and the father of Murad, and lastly to the Palace of Top-Kapou, where the mantle of the Prophet and the sacred Banner are deposited; and at night, the ceremony of this important day being over, he returned to the Palace of Dolma-Bagtche, where the ceremony of the investiture was completed.

Girt with the sword of Osman, Hamid II. reigned over Turkey, and the dark gloom of the Hamidian epoch was now about to settle over the land of the Osmanli.

On leaving the Palace of Dolma-Bagtche that night old Mehemet Rushdi, turning to his colleagues, said to them: "We have been in a great hurry to get rid of Murad. May we never have cause to repent what we have done."

With these quasi-prophetic words on his lips, feeling no doubt that a new era of struggles was about to open for which younger men were required, the veteran Grand

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Vizier, who had piloted the country through one *coup d'état*, and had very unwillingly assisted at a second dethronement, in consideration of his great age and feeble state of health, requested to be relieved of the duties of Grand Vizier. His request was granted, but three months after, Midhat, universally designated for the post, was nominated as his successor. These three months were passed under the Grand Vizierate of Mehemet Rushdi Pasha, but it was Midhat who was leader of the Cabinet, and Mehemet Rushdi was only the mouthpiece of Midhat, until the latter finally replaced him on the 16th December 1876.

The first audience accorded by the new sovereign to foreign envoys was to Count Zichy, the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador, accompanied by the Secretary of his Embassy. Safvet Pasha, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, was present. The audience lasted one hour, and turned exclusively on the affairs of Herzegovina, the ambassador laying stress on the gravity of the events passing there, the anxiety and expenses that disturbances on its borders caused the Dual Empire, and exhortations to the new sovereign to listen to the advice of the friendly Powers. All this was, as we have seen, in the strictest conformity with the *rôle* that Austria had been playing for two years. Having set light to the gunpowder in her neighbour's house, she quoted to that neighbour the familiar proverb, "Proximus ardet Ucalegon," and warned him of the consequences.

The next audience was granted to the Russian Ambassador, General Ignatieff, recently returned from St Petersburg with the last instructions from his Court. The tone that the ambassador and envoys of Russia, the Strogonoffs, and Mentchikoffs, and Ignatieffs, had rendered familiar to the Porte on its communications on critical occasions, was not absent on this occasion:

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"His Majesty the Emperor, my master, officially informed of Your Majesty's accession to the throne, has conferred on me the signal honour to represent him at Your Majesty's court. The friendly relations of the two countries may continue on the condition of the interests of both being assured. His Majesty the Emperor cannot view with indifference what is passing in the Ottoman Empire, possessing, as it does, the commercial routes of the Black Sea and the Mediterranean, and a portion of the inhabitants of which is of the same religion as his own.

"It is to the interest of our country that peace should reign in Turkey, and my country desires that late sad events should not be renewed, and that peace should be assured. His Majesty the Emperor is aware of the difficulties and critical moments that accompanied the accession of Your Majesty, and is convinced that the troubles will disappear, and that the re-establishment of peace in the interior will be secured. His Majesty the Emperor prays for the success of Your Majesty."

To this speech the Sultan made answer in a few appropriate words:

"More even than the Emperor of Russia. . . I desire the progress of Turkey, peace in my provinces, and my most ardent desire is to secure the happiness of my people."

Hardly had Abdul Hamid mounted the throne than the conflict between the two parties already described, commenced. The first act of the new reign was to appoint the *personnel* of the Imperial Household. Damad Mahmoud Djelaleddin Pasha was named Grand Marshal of the Palace, and Saïd (Ingless) Pasha, first aide-de-camp to the Sultan. To these no objections had been raised or conditions imposed. Their duties had reference to what might be considered the more strictly household functions of the Palace, and their appointment lay within the exclusive domain of the sovereign's personal choice. But it was very different with the office of First Secretary to the

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Sultan (or his successor) inasmuch as this important functionary has always been the right hand and mouthpiece of the sovereign, and the person by whom and through whom all communications pass between Ministers and the Sultan; and through the confidential character of his office, and his ready and continual access to the person of the sovereign, has always enjoyed a position of exceptional importance, hardly second to that of the Grand Vizier himself. It was for this reason that Midhat, attaching such importance to the worthy occupancy of this post, had not only laid stress on the necessity of its being filled by a functionary in harmony with the views of Ministers, but had actually laid down as one of the three conditions to which Prince Hamid was required to subscribe at the interview at Muslou-Oglou, that Sadullah Bey, Zia Bey and Kemal Bey should be chosen as occupants of the post of Secretary respectively. In spite of his formal acceptance of this condition, the Sultan informed Midhat Pasha on his very first visit to the Palace, that he had appointed Saïd Bey (Mahmoud's man) as his First Secretary. Astounded at this breach of faith, and aware of its significance—although perhaps not recognizing the full import of it—Midhat strongly remonstrated with the Sultan and urged a reconsideration of the appointment; but in spite of the remonstrances and prayers of his Ministers, the Sultan remained unmoved, and Midhat eventually acquiesced.

It is easy enough to be wise after the event and to see that Midhat ought to have put his foot down on this question and accepted the decisive battle thus offered him by the Sultan; that it ought to have been clear to him that this was only the first contest in a campaign that would decide the fate of Turkey during the whole of the coming reign, and that the first blow would probably decide the issue in the campaign. But our per-

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spective of things is of course better than was Midhat's. By the light of all the subsequent events that have unrolled themselves before our eyes, we now know the character of all the actors in the drama which was commencing, especially of the principal actor, and of this very First Secretary, who was the appropriate subject of the first contention. We can now appreciate the character of Damad Mahmoud Djelaleddin, the backbone and arm of the reaction; of some of the Ministers who had been feigning for months past to support Midhat's views and were only waiting the moment to betray him; and can recognise the existence of a matured and carefully laid plot to upset reform by crushing the reformers—all these things are palpable and clear to us in the broad daylight of subsequent events; but they were scarcely surmised or imagined at the time we are now dealing with. The important citadel of the Palace was delivered, with all its defences, into the hands of the conspirators, and the Palace as a whole was organised for the express purposes of the reformers. This strong position being once firmly secured, the new Sultan could afford to show his hand with little disguise. He could not yet afford to treat with Midhat; it would have been clumsy to do so at once, for Midhat in opposition would have been a force with which he would have had to reckon, and, moreover, he and the Constitution were both necessary as a means of combating the conference that was assembling; but short of a rupture with his Grand Vizier, which was to be studiously avoided, he could afford to emphasize more and more his opposition to the policy of Midhat, so that when the moment arrived he could strike a decisive blow with effect, and with less fear of the consequences.

Subjects of contention between them were not far to seek. The speech from the throne, written by Midhat, which was a *pronunciamento* of the policy of a new reign

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inaugurated under such exceptional circumstances, and looked for with great eagerness, was revised by the Sultan beyond recognition; the essential sentences were omitted, others of quite incomprehensive character substituted in their place. The keynote of the original was "a new Regime, the Constitution, and Reform"; this was changed, and meaningless colourless phrases took its place.

In order to give the reader an exact idea of the art displayed in this transformation, the speech actually delivered on this occasion is here appended, and the omitted sentences of the original, placed in parentheses:

"HATTI HUMAYUN.

"*On ascending the Throne*

"My illustrious Vizier, Mehemet Rushdi Pasha,—

"By the Divine will my elder brother, Sultan Murad V., vacated the throne, and according to the law of succession We have mounted the throne of our Ancestors.

"Appreciating your great qualities, your ability and experience in the affairs of State, We confirm you in the functions of Grand Vizier and of President of the Council of Ministers (avec le titre de Premier Ministre), and direct all Our Ministers to keep their respective posts. Confident in the assistance of the Almighty, We will pursue Our object of strengthening Our Empire, and of making all Our subjects, without exception, participate in the blessings of liberty, peace, and justice; We trust that Our Ministers will help us in the realisation of Our wishes (for Turkey ranks among the great Powers, and in order to attain this object and to march on a footing of equality with its neighbours in the progress of the sciences, she must needs follow the same methods; and as the Constitutional system is one of the principal causes of the progress of Nations, *We hereby declare this system of Government to be adopted by Us*, whilst holding strict account of the laws of the Cheri and the customs of Our people.) No one who casts a glance at the causes of the critical condition of affairs to-day, can fail to recognise among the various and numerous factors two

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principal ones, viz. the non-observance of the strict laws of the Cheri, and the capricious and wilful actions of men. If the disorganisation that has for some time reigned in the affairs of State has latterly greatly increased; if our financial operations no longer inspire confidence; if our Courts of Justice no longer command respect, if Our Empire, with its vast capacities for commerce, industries and agriculture, and of every kind of progress, has profited by none of these things—if, in fine, all the efforts that have been made to insure liberty and peace for Our subjects have remained fruitless, this comes from the non-observance of the laws and regulations; hence the necessity, whilst pursuing the noble object of assuring the happiness of Our subjects of commencing in the first place by the strict observation of existing laws, and of those which shall be elaborated and proclaimed in strict accordance with the laws of the Cheri and the wants of Our subjects, and by keeping a strict eye on the expenditure and revenues of the State, in order so to gain public confidence. (Each administrative department, therefore, must act prudently and abstain from useless expenses; and likewise with respect to the Household and other expenses of the Imperial Palaces, these shall be diminished and reduced to what is strictly necessary; and the Civil list of the Princes of the Imperial family shall also be reduced, and their amount shall be paid directly by the Minister of the Finances; and We make over to this same Minister, as reduction from our Own Civil list, the sum of £300,000, and We hereby fix the expenses of our Palace at the sum of £30,000 per month).

"The necessity of convoking a general assembly compatible with the habits and customs and capacity of Our population being more and more recognised and felt, Our Ministers will carefully and minutely study this question and submit their report on the subject to Our sanction. (In order to elaborate the Constitutional laws in conformity with the needs of Our population and their customs and usages and the law of the Cheri, We command our Ministers of State, the learned doctors of the law, and all those whose knowledge and experience can contribute to the perfection of the common work to unite in Council to express their opinions on the subject, and that on their report being approved by the Council of Ministers, it shall be submitted for Our approbation.) Further, the confusion in the affairs of State, result-

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ing as it does from the incapacity of certain functionaries in their posts, and from the frequent and unnecessary changes in the personnel, it is Our desire that from the present time, according to their different ranks, all office-holders shall be chosen according to their merit and capacity, and shall be irremovable without serious reason, and that each of these shall be responsible for the proper execution of his allotted duties. Moreover, Our attention is directed to the question of public instruction, and seeing that European nations have acquired the prosperity that they enjoy by means of public instruction, We desire that all Our subjects, without distinction of classes, shall be able to profit by the benefits of knowledge, each according to his personal capacity; (and in order that the progress of the country may produce the happiness of all its subjects alike, and in order to inculcate these ideas, We decree the foundation of schools in which instruction and education shall be common to all), and with this object We desire that the credits allotted to public education shall be increased, in order that without loss of time we may endeavour to realise this programme. In order, too, that the civil and financial administration of the Provinces may be restored to their normal condition, We must without loss of time endeavour to institute an organisation in the Provinces resembling as much as possible the Central organisation.

"(It is also absolutely necessary that the laws regulating the levying of tithes, taxes and indirect contributions shall be placed on a just and equitable basis, and all Our efforts will be directed to prevent any derogation or abuse in the execution of these laws. The buying and selling of slaves being contrary to the prescriptions of the Sacred Law (Cheri), We hereby enfranchise the slaves and eunuchs of Our Palace, and declare that henceforth all trade in slaves, whether purchase or sale, is hereby formally forbidden in Our Empire, and a date will be fixed for the gradual emancipation of all existing slaves, and special measures will be adopted to prevent any return of slavery.)

"Since last year, owing to malevolent instigations, Bosnia and Herzegovnia have been in a state of insurrection, and the revolt of Servia is now added as an outcome of this insurrection, so that the blood of the children of our common country is being spilt. The continuation of such a state of things is a subject of profound sorrow to Us,

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and Our most sincere desire is to put an end to it by the employment of the most energetic measures.

"Our treaties with foreign Powers having been renewed and recognised by Us, it will be Our aim to cultivate still further the friendly relations already existing with them.

"May the Almighty, our common Ruler and Master, grant through His mercy and goodness, success to our efforts.

"*Saturday*, 22 *Chaban*, 1292, *Hegira*."
(*9th September* 1876.)

The points of contention between the Palace, or the Sultan (which now become synonymous expressions), and Midhat were all contained in germ in the foregoing variations in the first speech from the throne.

(1) In the very first sentence of the Hatti Humayun of inauguration the Sultan had cut out a passage which would have introduced a change to which Midhat attached some importance—"my Grand Vizier with the title of Prime Minister." Midhat desired to abolish the title of Grand Vizier and to substitute for it that of Prime Minister, a change which would have entailed as a consequence the collective, instead of the individual, responsibility of Ministers. What the first Minister would lose in dignity and personal influence would be acquired by the Ministry collectively, and would thus consolidate the component parts of the Constitution. Midhat was well aware that this post of Prime Minister would require strengthening and developing for some time in Turkey, in view of the power and influence which the Throne derived from the very nature of the traditions and sentiments of the Ottomans, and the position of Islam in the world.

The purport and tendency of the proposal did not escape the new sovereign, and, faithful to his own views and interests, he simply cancelled the sentence and rejected the proposal.

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(2) Midhat had placed in the mouth of the Sultan the following phrase: "As the Constitutional system is one of the principal causes of the progress of nations, we hereby declare this system of government to be adopted by Us, whilst holding, etc."—instead of which, after some colourless commonplace sentences about the non-observance of laws and regulations and pursuing the noble object of assuring the happiness of our subjects, he speaks of the necessity of convoking "a general Assembly compatible with the habits and customs and capacity of our population" (which might mean anything or nothing according to the estimate of their capacity), and he orders his Ministers carefully and minutely to study this question (which they had done for a year past), and submit the report to his sanction.

(3) In connection with the same important subject Midhat had proposed, for the purpose of elaborating the Constitutional laws, the convention of a Grand Council composed of the Ministers of State, the Doctors of the Law, and all those whose knowledge and experience entitled them to a voice in the country, to express their opinion on the subject, and that on their report being revised by the Council of Ministers it should be submitted to the approbation of the Sultan.

This proposal evidently meant business, and would not only have fixed a limit of time for the inauguration of the new Constitution, but would have given it the *imprimatur* of all that was enlightened and worthy of respect and attention in the empire. The Sultan rejected the sentence *in toto*.

(4) Midhat, who was deeply concerned by the actual condition of Turkish Finances, and thoroughly convinced that the first step in setting this right must be the exercise of rigid economy in all branches of the administration, and who, moreover, had experience of all that had taken

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place in the reign of Abdul Aziz, did not hesitate to propound to Abdul Hamid what his predecessor Murad had unhesitatingly accepted, viz., that the expenses of the household and of the Imperial Palace should be diminished and reduced to what was strictly necessary, and the Civil list of the princes of the Imperial family should be in like manner reduced, and their amount paid directly by the Minister of Finance, and he left it to the sovereign to make over a sum that he should fix himself for the monthly expenses of the Palace.

The Sultan omitted the whole paragraph.

(5) Midhat attached the greatest importance to the question of mixed schools in the provinces where Christians and Mussulmans lived together. The reader will recollect (p. 40) that when Governor of the provinces of the Danube he desired to establish this system in Bulgaria, and it was this very proposal which excited the anxiety and stirred the energies of the vigilant Ignatieff to defeat the proposal and obtain the dismissal of the Vali.

The Governor of Bulgaria—who now became for the second time the Grand Vizier of the empire—desired to make this cherished scheme general in all the provinces of the empire, and in the inaugural speech he had placed in the Sultan's mouth words that signified the adoption of this measure and its inauguration in the empire, "in order that the progress of the country may produce the happiness of all its subjects alike; and in order to inculcate these ideas, *We decree the foundation of these schools*, in which instruction and education shall be common to all."

Instead of this categorical declaration the Sultan substituted the colourless proposal: "We desire that all Our subjects, without distinction of classes, shall be able to profit by the benefits of knowledge, each according to his

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personal capacity," which will bear the exact sense that anybody may choose to attribute to it.

We shall very shortly see what practical sense the Sultan himself attributed to it.

(6) Midhat desired to abolish the slave trade, which he considered a scandal and a disgrace to the empire, and incompatible with its pretensions to a high place in the ranks of civilised nations. He proposed, therefore, in this inaugural speech to proclaim its abolition, and that the Sultan should inaugurate the change by enfranchising all the slaves in the Palace. The Sultan cut out the whole paragraph.

With such a radical difference in the whole point of view from which the Palace clique and the new Grand Vizier regarded the situation, it was clear that occasions for serious conflict would not be wanting, nor would be long in manifesting themselves. They arose indeed at once, and it will be seen that each subject of contention was implicitly contained in the divergence of views manifested with reference to the speech from the throne that has just been analysed.

The question of the Constitution naturally occupied the foreground in these disputes. The Sultan, as has been seen, refused to submit its provisions to a Grand Council to be summoned *ad hoc*, lest it should receive, as it undoubtedly would have received, this important sanction. He preferred that Ministers should be its sole sponsors, which would leave him free to deny subsequently that its details had been stamped with the seal of national approval. From the very first days of his accession he had shown the greatest anxiety on this subject of the Constitution, and no wonder: it was what the Magna Charta was to John of England—the curb and limit of arbitrary power and exaction.

Knowing that Midhat was its chief champion, it was

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with him that he entered into negotiations on the subject, even before the actual resignation of Mehemet Rushdi Pasha. The following significant letter signed with his own name (instead of through the usual vehicle of the First Secretary's signature) was the warning shot fired across the enemy's bows:—

Letter addressed by the Sultan to Midhat Pasha on the eve of his Grand Vizierate.[1]

"*To my illustrious Vizier, Midhat Pasha.*

"We have made ourselves acquainted with the Constitution which you unofficially forwarded to us, and we have noticed in it passages incompatible with the habits and aptitudes of the nation. Our desire is to assure the future of the country by just administration, and we cannot but appreciate all efforts towards that end. And one of the objects to which we attach much importance is that of *safeguarding the Sovereign rights* by a new organisation drawn up with regard to the needs of the people. We desire therefore that the Constitution should be discussed by the Council of Ministers, and should be revised in the manner referred to above. Communicate our greetings to our Grand Vizier and show him this order. In any case we expect from your patriotism that your efforts shall tend towards the object we have in view, and demand that this Irade shall be kept secret between our Grand Vizier and yourself.

"ABDUL HAMID

"9 *Zilkade*, 1293, *Hegira*."
(*25th November* 1876.)

Reply.

To the First Secretary of His Majesty.[1]

"EXCELLENCY,—As it was impossible for me to thank His Majesty for the favours and the many proofs of good-will with which he overwhelms me every day and every moment, I am entirely unable to testify my gratitude for the signal honour, so disproportionate to my

[1] *Nineteenth Century*, January 1903.

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deserts, which I have received in the reply of an autograph letter from His Majesty, inviting me to furnish certain explanations of the text of the Constitution unofficially forwarded to His Majesty. As to the contents of the report which has been submitted, I myself also recognise that the majority of the articles require to be modified and changed, and I think it is not necessary to say that if this text has been submitted to His Majesty as an incomplete rough draft, it was simply with the intention of correcting it later according to the views and wishes of His Majesty. This report has been drawn up and completed by the Commission convened for the purpose by Imperial command, and, as the time has come when the text should be studied by the Council of Ministers, the terms of the Imperial Irade have been communicated to His Highness the Grand Vizier. Now, urged by fidelity to my Sovereign and my love for my country, I feel it incumbent upon me, and have the courage to be of opinion that there are two methods of extrication from our present position. The first consists in putting into execution, before the meeting of the Conference, the reforms for our home government that were promised and proclaimed to all the Powers, and the time needed for so doing would be three or four days at the outside. The second method is to accept the proposals formulated by the Powers, and to make up our minds to live henceforth and for ever under their tutelage. If the first method is not adopted, or even if its promulgation is delayed and retarded until after the meeting of the Conference, the second becomes inevitable. My attachment to my Sovereign and my love for my country force me to give utterance to these ideas.

"I am . . .

"MIDHAT.

"11 *Ziikade*, 1293, *Hegira*."
(*27th November* 1876.)

The inner meaning of the words "safeguarding the Sovereign rights" contained the pith and kernel of the conspirators' views and intentions. It had direct reference to a clause which the Sultan desired to have inserted in the text of the Constitution, or rather (and the difference is very material) to a rider which he

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desired to be added to a clause (the 113th), referring to the declaration of a state of siege in disturbed districts. The purport and intention of the clause would naturally govern its different branches. It could not possibly be supposed to apply to Ministers themselves, inasmuch as the Constitution specially and elaborately provided for their trial and punishment in clauses 31, 32, and 34 of the text. In spite, however, of the provisions and safeguards which were to hedge and limit the exercise of this prerogative, Midhat had long combated the insertion of this rider to the 113th article. Anxious above all things, however, to get the Constitution promulgated not later than the first sitting of the Conference, and not as yet fully grasping the character of the man he was dealing with, he listened to the explanations and glosses offered with reference to this rider, and finally, though reluctantly, consented to its insertion in the text of the Constitution.

It is easy to see now that this was the second error of tactics committed by Midhat. "Put not your trust in princes" is an especially wise injunction when you do not know the character of the princes you are dealing with. If Midhat had forced the Sultan Hamid—as he might have done, if he had been less trustful and more strenuous—to observe strictly the terms of the treaty of Muslou-Oglou that Prince Hamid had agreed to as a condition of his mounting on the throne at all, Midhat would never have been banished, and the Constitution would never have been strangled. Good men are rarely as determined and strenuous as bad men. It is a pity, for half the political ills of the world come from this weakness on their part.

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CHAPTER V

SECOND GRAND VIZIERATE OF MIDHAT PASHA

ON 19th December 1876, three months after the accession of Abdul Hamid to the throne, Midhat was appointed Grand Vizier. His nomination to this post was again welcomed with great rejoicing in Turkey, and gave Europe generally hopes of the accomplishment of some reforms. Sir Henry Elliot addressed the following despatch to Lord Derby:—

"*Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.*

"CONSTANTINOPLE, *19th December* 1876.

"MY LORD,—Midhat Pasha has been appointed Grand Vizier in the place of Mehemet Rushdi Pasha. The importance of this appointment at this moment is very great. Midhat Pasha is beyond question the most energetic and liberal of the Turkish statesmen, and a man of action, although his decisions are sometimes hasty.

"He has always advocated the equality of Mussulmans and Christians, and wishes for a constitutional control over the power of the Grand Vizier as well as of the Sultan. He is opposed to centralisation, and in favour of giving the provincial populations much control over their local affairs.

"He has at times spoken strongly to me against the grant of special institution in the Slav Provinces; but he is a man who listens to argument, and may, perhaps, be brought to see the necessity of it under the present circumstances.

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"He is disliked by the old Mussulman party, but is regarded as the hope of the Mussulman reformers and of the Christians.

"He used formerly always to wish to follow the advice of Her Majesty's Government, but I am not aware what his feelings towards England are at this moment.[1]

"I have . . .

"HENRY ELLIOT."

Midhat pointed out to the Sultan, in a letter addressed to Saïd, the danger of the delay and procrastination that would be caused by too prolonged discussion on the text of the Constitution; further, that the text which had been submitted to the Sultan was such as had been decided upon by the Commission appointed by His Majesty himself, and that that text, after having been submitted to His Majesty as it came from the hands of the Commission, was now, together with His Majesty's observations on it, being considered by the Ministers as a final stage, requiring at most three or four days' deliberation, and that any longer delay before its actual promulgation would assuredly raise in the minds of the friendly Powers a doubt as to the sincerity of the Turkish Government in the work of the reform; and he insisted, finally, that, in order to convince them of this sincerity, it was essentially desirable that the promulgation of the Constitution should take place before the date fixed for the assembly of the Conference.

At the very first Ministerial Council under Midhat's presidency as Grand Vizier, held at the house of Mahmoud Damad—a significant circumstance in itself—the conspirators showed their hand. When the subject of the Constitution and its promulgation came under discussion, Djevdet Pasha, Minister for Justice, and Mahmoud's man, who had hitherto been "lying low" awaiting

[1] "Blue Book," *Turkey*, 2, No. 105.

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developments, suddenly sprang upon his colleagues the proposal that the whole question of the Constitution should be indefinitely adjourned, on the pretext that with the change that had taken place in the occupancy of the throne it was no longer necessary. The indignation and wrath of Midhat can easily be imagined at the audacity and perversity of this audacious proposition; he apostrophised his colleague in no sparing terms, and pointed out to him that the sole ground and justification of the solemn act of deposition to which they had lent their countenance was the necessity of having the Constitution promulgated; and he made Djevdet and Mahmoud, and any other weak-kneed colleague who might be inclined to support their views, very clearly understand that he would throw up his office and retire into private life if the slightest hesitation was shown on their part with respect to this essential matter. By this uncompromising firmness he dispelled any illusion that might have been harboured that a frontal attack on the Constitution, with Midhat at the helm, could be of any avail, and the opposition feigned acquiescence in the Grand Vizier's views. The incident, however, was not the less significant, and ought to have warned Midhat of what was secretly preparing in the councils of the conspirators.

It has been said, among other equally groundless and disingenuous criticisms, that "Midhat's Constitution," as it has been called, was a simple device to defeat the Conference that was about to assemble. One single fact, vouched for on an authority that will not be disputed, absolutely disposes of this calumny. Sir Henry Elliot, referring to these very matters, distinctly says that Midhat Pasha and his friends had informed him that they were working for the promulgation of a Constitution, and explained their views fully to him, twelve months before

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there was any question of a conference at all: "This was more than a year before its promulgation, when it was declared to have been invented to defeat the Conference then sitting at Constantinople!"[1]

That Midhat and his friends used the fact of the promulgation as a weapon to oppose the decisions of the Conference is likely enough; but this was perfectly fair dealing, and a legitimate weapon to make use of. Another proposition which is not true, and is proved to have been false, is that the Constitution was invented for the purpose of defeating the Conference. It is abundantly evident that if there had been no Conference at all, the Constitution would none the less have been elaborated and its promulgation insisted on.

Another disingenuous and captious criticism passed on the Constitution by its enemies is the implication contained in the expression "Midhat's Constitution," as if it was a "one-man's" Constitution, and not the work of what may be called the national mind—that is, the majority of the best minds in it. That Midhat had a great deal to say in its elaboration, and still more in its promulgation, in spite of the unconcealed opposition of the Sultan, and the Palace, and the whole phalanx of reaction behind them, there can of course be no doubt whatever, and to his eternal honour be it said; but that it was a "one-man's" work, in the sense that it was not the expression of the wants and wishes of the nation, is disproved by all the circumstances connected with it. Chakir Effendi, one of its warmest partisans, was one of the most learned, distinguished and highly esteemed Ulema at Constantinople; it was he who headed a deputation of Ulemas and doctors of the law, to congratulate Midhat immediately after the ceremony of promulgation was over. The most enthusiastic champions of both Midhat

[1] *Nineteenth Century*, February 1888, p. 279.

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and the Constitution were the Softas, or body of students, numbering several thousands, of all the *medresses* (schools and universities) in Constantinople, the future generation of the educated mind of the nation. The provinces, without exception, were in favour of it. The important city of Adrianople sent a congratulatory address to Midhat, which the Sultan would not allow to be published in the papers. The instinct of the masses looked upon it as the one resource in the dire straits of the nation. The very fact that, with an opposing Sultan clinging to his "sovereign rights," and a bitterly hostile and determined Palace clique, and in spite of all the means at the disposal of Turkey's nearest and most powerful neighbour unscrupulously put into action, the Constitution ever saw the daylight, and actually lived for a twelvemonth in such an environment, is the very strongest evidence that can possibly be adduced of its inherent vitality, and an undeniable proof that it was something more than a "one-man's" Constitution.

The Constitution, although the principal, was not the only subject of contention between the new Sultan and his Vizier. There were questions of persons, questions of money, questions of education that divided them irreconcilably. The Sultan, who had no doubt fixed on Edhem Pasha as the pliable instrument that he would need after the Conference was over, and when the work of getting rid of Midhat had to be gone through, desired to elevate one who, in his opinion, "was not quite the person for a very high position," to a post whence subsequent promotion to the very highest position would seem a little less incongruous. He accordingly selected Edhem Pasha for the post of President of the Council of State, the important office concerned with the elaboration of the laws of the country. Midhat's candidate was Sadik Pasha, whose competency was beyond dispute.

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Damad Mahmoud Djelaleddin wished to have Djevdet Pasha, his faithful henchman—whom we have already seen at work—nominated to this post, but even the Sultan thought his knowledge and intellectual capacity altogether too circumscribed. The accompanying letter shows the strong insistence of the Sultan on his own intention. He had the great advantage over Midhat which conspirators always have, viz., of having his plan of campaign with a distinct aim already settled, and knowing therefore beforehand the strong position which it was necessary to occupy on the field of battle.

Midhat, ignorant of the game that was being played, sacrificed point after point in it, considering their importance with reference to public affairs secondary to that of having the Constitution promulgated as soon as possible.

The following letter makes these points clear :—

To Midhat Pasha, Grand Vizier.

"HIGHNESS,—After you had left the Palace, His Majesty sent for me and questioned me as to the cause of the delay in the nomination of Edhem Pasha as President of the Council of State. I told His Majesty that the Irade (order) relative to that appointment had been communicated to your Highness yesterday, and that probably the visit of the French Envoy to your Highness was the cause of the delay in my receiving an answer to the communication, and I told His Majesty that the only motive of your opposition to the appointment was the incapacity of Edhem Pasha to fulfil the duties of a post to which were confided the constitutional functions of elaborating the laws; that as for Sadik Pasha, whom you proposed for that post, there could be no doubt that his nomination would add a useful person to the Ministerial Councils. At that moment Damad Mahmoud Djelaleddin was called in, and he expressed the same opinion, but proposed that Djevdet Pasha should be appointed President of the Council, and that Edhem Pasha, whose incompetency you objected to, might fill the post of Minister of Justice. On this His Majesty made the following declaration: 'I am not acquainted with Edhem Pasha, in spite

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of his services to my father, but I have now learned to appreciate his abilities; I intend therefore to profit by everybody's capacities, and *although Edhem Pasha is not quite the person to occupy a very high position*, I think nevertheless he is capable of performing the duties of President of the Council of State. The knowledge and learning of Djevdet Pasha are very limited, whereas the accomplishments and capacity of Edhem Pasha are great in comparison with his. In a word, I shall be glad if His Highness the Grand Vizier will acquiesce in my wishes, and will to-morrow propose his nomination to me. Write and tell him so.' This is the reason why I have written at length to you on the subject.—I have the honour to be,

"(Signed) SAID.

"6 *Zilhidje*, 1293, 1 *o'clock, Hegira.*"
(22*nd December* 1876.)

Another and still more serious difference of opinion, relative to persons, arose concerning Zia Bey. This person, one of the most distinguished litterateurs and poets Turkey possessed, who had been appointed private Secretary of the Sultan Murad, and whose nomination to the same post by the present Sultan had been made an article of the treaty between Midhat and Prince Hamid at Muslou-Oglou, was suspected of inspiring certain articles in the Turkish paper *Istikbal* which threw doubts on the Sultan's sincerity with reference to the Constitution. These articles gave great offence at the Palace, and were considered of dangerous tendency. The Sultan determined not only to proceed against the paper, but also to remove Zia Bey, at any price, from the capital.

The accompanying letter will show the feelings of the Sultan on the subject:

To Midhat Pasha.

"HIGHNESS,—The Imperial Irade (written order) relative to the nomination of Zia Bey to the post of Ambassador at Berlin, was communicated to your Highness yesterday evening, and His Majesty has just asked me if the pro-

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posed nomination had arrived, and on my reply in the negative His Majesty ordered me to insist upon it, adding the following observation: 'Zia Bey is very ambitious, and if he had known how to profit by this quality with a view to his advancement and his future, he would have succeeded in obtaining a post here suited to his capacity; but this person has never yet shown any stability of character or fixity of purpose, and when anything occurs contrary to his views and wishes, he is in the habit of weaving intrigues in the matter, which is not favourable to his prolonged sojourn in Constantinople. His removal, moreover, from the capital cannot but facilitate for the Grand Vizier the exercise of his functions in freeing him from this kind of obstacle. These observations of mine are no exaggerations; but if on the one hand Zia Bey's individual merit is only mediocre, the people are naturally attracted by these critics and attend to their criticisms, and in this way lend an importance to these polemics which they do not intrinsically deserve. As for the despatch of Zia Bey to Berlin, the Government is resolved to take the same steps at Berlin as it has determined to take at Paris, London, and Vienna, and to endeavour to gain the sympathies of Prince Bismark (*sic*), and if Zia Bey succeed in this, he will have shown his *savoir faire*, earned the gratitude of the State, and by the fact itself shown his aptitude for foreign affairs, and then his further promotion will be justified. Moreover, his selection will provoke no opposition on the part of the Court of Berlin.' On account of these considerations His Majesty orders this nomination to be submitted to him as soon as possible. It is, moreover, by Imperial command that I have written to you at such length on the subject, and have repeated what has already been said; and His Majesty desires that you will carry out these injunctions by to-morrow at the audience you will have with His Majesty.

"I have the honour to be,

"(Signed) SAID.

"12 *Zilhidje*, 1293, *Hegira*."
(28*th December* 1876.)

In the meantime the population of Constantinople, who have been represented by interested critics as indifferent about the Constitution and reform, hearing of the

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proposed exile of this champion of the Constitution and reform, determined to prevent his departure from the capital by electing him as one of their representatives in the new Parliament. Consternation is not too strong a term to describe the feelings that this proposal excited in the Palace. Zia Bey had an influence among the people of the capital. What if his presence among them in the Parliament should checkmate all the plans of a carefully hatched conspiracy? The following letter clearly reveals this consternation :—

To Midhat Pasha, Grand Vizier.

"HIGHNESS,—His Majesty has just read in the paper *Istikbal* that the population of Constantinople have decided to elect Zia Bey as their representative, and that a petition signed by several thousand persons will be addressed to the Palace with a view of retaining Zia Bey in the capital. Thereupon His Majesty declared categorically that the candidature of Zia Bey as deputy was not acceptable; that numerous acts proved the participation of Zia Bey in acts against his Sovereign; that the constitution forbade the entry into Parliament of individuals compromised in any way.[1]

"'It is to be observed that this person has had recourse to various methods, including the intervention of the Press and other contrivances, to gain popularity for himself. Although these proceedings have constituted no claim on his part for favourable consideration from the Government, the rank of Vizier has been conferred upon him, and the post of Governor-General in one of the most important vilayets, viz., Syria, simply in order to comply with the request of the Grand Vizier. But Zia Bey, far from exhibiting any gratitude, has sought more than ever to exercise an influence in the Capital, through his position as Vizier, by announcing in the *Istikbal* that he is one of the originators of the Constitution, which was, in fact, promulgated by our desire with the co-operation of a few

[1] Although a man of this description, unfit for Parliament, was quite fitted to represent his Sovereign at one of the most important Courts of Europe.—AUTHOR.

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patriots. We have consequently directed the Grand Vizier to proceed against Zia Bey in such matter as may seem proper to him.' Such was the declaration of His Majesty. His Majesty further criticised the action of the *Istikbal*, which, without reason, has just published the famous letter of Mustafa Fazil Pasha, and calls your attention to the fact of that paper, though suspended indefinitely, having reappeared. His Majesty considers it urgent to find means to put an end to such doings in the Press.

"I have the honour to be

"(Signed) SAÏD.

"24 *Zilhidje*, 1293, *Hegira*."
(*9th January* 1877.)

As the concluding passage of this letter shows, the Sultan, whilst banishing Zia Bey, determined, *pour encourager les autres*, to proceed with all possible vigour against the Press. There was to be no faltering in so grave a matter. For this purpose the *Istikbal* was to be suspended, and a Draconian law against the Press prepared "within three or four days," although by Article 12 of the Constitution this matter ought to have been left to be dealt with by the Parliament.

The following letters speak for themselves :—

To Midhat Pasha, Grand Vizier.

"HIGHNESS,—His Majesty, after having made the remark to me that the contents of the article 'The Future of Islam,' published by the *Vakit*, and especially the words underlined, were calculated to lead astray public opinion, and referring to an interview with your Highness yesterday evening on the subject of the Press, orders your Highness to inform him of the measures you intend to take against the Editor of this particular paper, for having published facts calculated to make a bad impression, and, moreover, to propose to him a competent person . . . as Director of the Bureau of the Press, in the place of the present functionary, who has been guilty

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of inattention and negligence, and must be nominated to some other post.

"As the Press, basing its pretensions on the liberty it enjoys under the Constitution, does not cease to publish all sorts of things, His Majesty, with a view to putting an end to abuses, and placing a curb on the license of the newspapers, commands your Highness to give the necessary orders in the proper quarter to complete within the delay of three or four days, the law on the Press, referred to in the Constitution.

"I have the honour to be

"(Signed) SAÏD.

"15 *Zilhidje*, 1293, *Hegira*."
(31*st December* 1876.)

To Midhat Pasha, Grand Vizier.

"HIGHNESS,—With reference to the measures to be taken against the Editor of the *Vakit*, I presented to His Majesty the note sent by your Honour last night on this subject. Whilst accepting the spirit of your observations, and even granting that the article in that paper was not in itself seditious, it is not the less a fact that that paper published, without any plausible justification, a statement to the effect that the *Fetva* of Sheik-ul-Islam is sufficient to depose a Sultan, a declaration calculated to prompt the people to a seditious movement, and to nullify the conditions and safeguards on which the promulgation of the *Fetva* depends, teaching the people that all power is attached to the individual will of the functionary who issues the *Fetva*. If such acts are tolerated, the papers will not fail to profit by the license, and to abuse it, and His Majesty orders that the Imperial Irade issued against the *Vakit* and its Editor shall be executed as soon as possible by way of example; the present law with respect to the Press being sufficient for this purpose. Further, the journal *Istikbal*, in its number of last Tuesday, published a long article to the effect that the delay in the promulgation of the Constitution, which was elaborated and ready for promulgation in his reign, had caused all kinds of ills, and this article corroborates the facts above referred to; and it is with a view to preventing the Press, either from ignorance or evil intention, from adopting a line of reasoning in contradiction to the views and intentions of His Majesty, that His Majesty commands me, with a view of

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emphasising his views on the subject, to send you a copy of the incriminated article.

"I have the honour to be,

"(Signed) SAÏD.

"18 *Zilhidje*, 1293, *Hegira*."
(*2nd January* 1877.)

Two other subjects of grave difference were the cause of a good deal of fencing between Midhat and the Palace. The one was the position of Galib Pasha, Minister of Finance, whom Midhat was determined to remove from the post of Minister of Finance; the other had reference to mixed education in the State schools, a subject on which Midhat had always held very strong views. But as the foreign envoys in the capital were now demanding the convocation of the official meeting of the Conference, it was determined to postpone the final resolution on these subjects till after the Conference was over.

The preliminary difficulties being at last overcome, or at least their discussion postponed till after the Conference was over, the date for the proclamation of the Constitution, with the Sultan's famous rider inserted in the text, like the fatal gift of the evil fairy in the fable, was finally determined on.

On the morning of the 23rd December, 1876, in the big open space in front of the Sublime Porte, facing the apartments reserved for the Sultan, a large platform was erected, profusely decorated with Turkish flags. Hither all the notabilities and Ulemas and Ministers were convoked to hear the promulgation of the new Constitution which, in the view of its promoters and supporters, was to inaugurate a new era for the sorely tried empire of the Osmanli. It might indeed have been a day marked in red, the greatest date in Turkish history. As it was, it was only the first act of a stupendous comedy.

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The notabilities were now assembled, and in spite of a downpour of rain, an immense crowd of people came to witness and applaud the ceremony. The troops lined the road between Sirkedji and the Sublime Porte, and along it, at mid-day. Saïd Pasha, the first Secretary to the Sultan, in full uniform, preceded by a military band, arrived at the Sublime Porte, bearing the Sultan's letter (*Hatti Humayun*) of promulgation, addressed to the Grand Vizier Midhat Pasha, and the text of the Constitution. The letter ran as follows:—

Rescript (Hatti Humayun) of the Sultan promulgating the Ottoman Constitution.

"MY ILLUSTRIOUS GRAND VIZIER, MIDHAT PASHA,—The power of Our Empire was lately declining. Foreign affairs were not the cause of this, but men had strayed from the right path in the administration of home affairs, and the bonds that attached Our subjects to the Government had been relaxed. My august Father, the late Sultan, Abdul Medjid, granted a Charter of Reform, the *Tanzimat*, which guaranteed, in accordance with the sacred law of the Cheri, life, property, and honour to all.

"It has been in consequence of the salutary effect of the *Tanzimat* that the State has, up to the present time, been able to maintain itself in security, and that We have been enabled to found and proclaim this day the Constitution which is the result of ideas and opinions fully expressed.

"On this auspicious occasion I desire to recall with a feeling of special devotion the memory of My late august Father, who has been rightly considered the regenerator of his country. I doubt not that he would have himself inaugurated the Constitutional era that we are about to enter this day, if the period of the promulgation of the *Tanzimat* had been adapted to the necessities of our own times. But it has been to Our reign that Providence has reserved the task to accomplish this happy transformation, which is the supreme guarantee of the welfare of Our peoples. I thank Heaven for allowing me to be its instrument.

"It is evident that the principle of our Government

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had become incompatible with the successive modifications introduced into our internal organisation, and the increasing development of our foreign relations. Our most earnest desire is to cause the disappearance of all obstacles to the full enjoyment by the nation of all the natural resources it possesses, and, in a word, to see Our subjects put into the possession of rights which appertain to all civilised society, and to be united together in a common bond of progress, union, and concord.

"In order to attain this object it was necessary to adopt a salutary regular organisation, to safeguard the inalienable rights of the Governing body by the abolition of faults and abuses of all kinds, *which result from illegality—that is to say, from the arbitrary power of one or more individuals:* to accord the same rights and to prescribe the same duties to all the members of the several communities composing our Society, and to enable them all to profit, without distinction, by the blessings of liberty, justice and equality—these being the only possible methods of guaranteeing and protecting the interests of all.

"From these essential principles flows the necessity of another eminently useful work: viz., that of connecting Public Right with a deliberative and constitutional System. That is the reason why in the Hatt that We promulgated on Our accession to the Throne We declared the urgency of creating a Parliament.

"A special Commission composed of the highest dignitaries, Ulemas and functionaries of the State, has carefully elaborated the basis of a Constitution, and this again has been studied and approved by Our Council of Ministers.

"This fundamental Charter confirms the prerogatives of the Sovereign; the civil and political equality of Ottomans before the law; the responsibilities and duties of Ministers and Officials; the complete independence of the Tribunals; the efficient balancing of the Budget, and lastly, the decentralisation of provincial administration, whilst preserving the decisive action and the powers of the Central Government.

"All these principles, *in strict conformity with the dispositions of the Cheri*, as well as to Our aptitude and aspirations, are equally in harmony with Our generous desire to assure the happiness and prosperity of all Our subjects, which is Our Supreme wish.

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"Confiding in the Divine Grace and in the intercession of the Prophet, I am now placing in your hand this Constitution after having invested it with My Imperial sanction. With the assistance of God, it will immediately be applied to all portions of Our Empire.

"Therefore, it is My decided will that you shall publish it, and shall see that it shall be executed, from this day forth.

"You must, moreover, take the promptest and most efficacious measures to proceed with the study and elaboration of the laws and regulations mentioned in this instrument.

"May the Almighty deign to accord success to all those who work for the salvation of the Empire and the Nation.

"Given this 7th of Zilhidje 1293, Hegira."

(*23rd December* 1876.)

The reading of the *Hatti Humayun* concluded, the First Secretary ceremoniously handed the Grand Vizier the text of the Constitution, after reverently raising it to his lips. The Grand Vizier received it with the like ceremony, and then handed it to the Grand Referendary,[1] Mahmoud Bey, who read it to the assembled people, while thousands of fly-leaves bearing the text of the Constitution were distributed in all directions.

After the text was read, Midhat made a speech, expressing gratitude to the Sultan for the graciousness of this act in promulgating the Constitution, the immense importance of which he proceeded to point out to the people. When he had concluded, the Mufti of Adrianople offered up a prayer, and all the people cried "Amen," and a salute of 101 guns from the Seraskierate announced to the whole city that "the Constitution" was proclaimed.

The Ulemas with the Sheik-ul-Islam (Hairullah Effendi) at their head; the Christian clergy with their patriarchs; the Ministers; the learned and distinguished Chakir Effendi,

[1] The Director-General of official and private correspondence between the Palace and the Sublime Porte.

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followed by the Softas and students; the representatives of all the corporations, and the populace of the capital, with flags bearing the inscription "Liberty," came to congratulate Midhat, at his own residence, on the new era of liberty. In the evening the mosques were illuminated, and the people, carrying torches, paraded the streets, crying, "Long live the Sultan and Midhat Pasha!" Telegrams of congratulation were received from all the provinces of the Empire, expressing the joy felt at this great event. In short, the whole populace was in a state of rejoicing; the Palace of Bechiktashe was the only place not illuminated. The Sultan was indisposed.

Although it was contrary to custom for a Grand Vizier to pay an official visit to the religious communities, Midhat Pasha went the following day to the Greek and Armenian Patriarchs and to the Jewish Chief Rabbi, to thank them for their expressions of rejoicing at the new Constitution. He was received with enthusiasm by the patriarchs, and the Christian populace threw flowers in his way. The Grand Vizier made speeches in which he declared that he recognised no distinctions between Mussulmans and Christians, as they were all children of the same country, urging that all should work together as brothers to promote the progress of their country, under one flag, and by the aid of the new liberty pronounced by His Majesty the Sultan.

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CHAPTER VI

THE CONFERENCE AND MIDHAT'S EXILE

THE day fixed for the first plenary meeting of the Conference of Constantinople was the same as that chosen for the promulgation of the Constitution. That there was a purpose in the simultaneous occurrence of the two events admits of no doubt; but to conclude from that fact, as has been disingenuously argued, that the Constitution was a mere device to defeat the ends of the Conference, is, of course, absurd, and has been conclusively disproved.

On the 23rd December (1876), accordingly, the envoys and plenipotentiaries of the Great Powers met in the handsome building of the Admiralty on the Golden Horn, in the large hall that had been prepared for their reception, to discuss with the Turkish envoys the condition of the Christian provinces of the empire. There were present, Count Zichy and Baron Calice representing Austro-Hungary; Count Chaudordy and Count Bourgoing representing France; Baron Werther representing Germany; Lord Salisbury and Sir Henry Elliot representing Great Britain; General Ignatieff representing Russia, and Edhem Pasha and Safvet Pasha representing the Empire that was to be placed on the dissecting table.

Scarcely had the preliminary formalities been concluded, when from across the Bosphorus, at the Seraskierate, was heard the booming of the first gun that

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announced the proclamation of the new Constitution. Thereupon a somewhat dramatic scene—that, no doubt, had been arranged beforehand—was enacted. Safvet Pasha arose in his place, and, addressing the assembled plenipotentiaries, said: "Gentlemen, the cannon that you hear across the Bosphorus notifies the commencement of the promulgation by His Majesty the Sultan of a Constitution guaranteeing equal rights and constitutional liberties to all the subjects of the Empire alike; and in the presence of this great event, I think our labours become superfluous."

This little speech of the Turkish Envoy was received by the assembly in chilling silence. The somewhat theatrical *coup* had evidently missed its effect. After a few moments' dead silence, General Ignatieff moved that the Conference should proceed with the business of the day. The proceedings themselves were not lengthy. The envoys of the Great Powers had been a whole month in Constantinople holding unofficial meetings among themselves, from which the Turkish delegates were studiously excluded; and the programme to be followed and the policy to be enforced had all been arranged before the official meeting took place. The object of this somewhat unusual proceeding was clear. Turkey was to be given to understand that it had to do with a veritable Concert of Europe, which, however much it might minimise the demands made by one of the Powers interested, would insist unanimously on substantial concessions from the Porte, and that the latter must in consequence dismiss any hope or expectation of dissensions or jealousies breaking out between the Powers.

The achievement of this unanimity was intended as the master-stroke of Lord Salisbury's policy. He did not imagine then, though he probably has realised it since, that the *rôle* he was playing at Constantinople had been

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carefully prepared for him at Vienna, and that the success of his efforts was simply the triumph of Count Andrassy's policy. What remained for the Conference to do was, not to discuss measures, but to formulate decisions. There was, at any rate, this advantage in such a summary method: the agony would not be prolonged. The business of the Conference began, like a Dutch auction, with a maximum opening bid on the part of the Russian envoy. He proposed the autonomy of the province of Bulgaria, the appointment of a Christian Vali, the formation of a national militia, and the confinement of Turkish troops within the limits of certain fixed fortresses. The Turkish envoys having declared these proposals entirely inadmissible and beyond the sphere of discussion, the proposal was modified to what General Ignatieff designated "un minimum extrême et irreductible," viz., that Bulgaria should be endowed with a special privileged government, and with an international commission to watch the administration, and that the appointment of its Governor should be submitted to the approval of the Great Powers. To this proposal, again, the Turkish envoys demurred, pointing out that the examples of Servia and Roumania, to which special privileged governments had been conceded with the other special arrangements now proposed for Bulgaria, were not encouraging precedents for a repetition of a similar experiment in Bulgaria: that the Mahomedan population in the above-named States had not been treated with the equality and liberality promised and stipulated for, but had found themselves under the necessity of emigrating *en masse* from those countries, and that even the extreme concessions made to these States, removing all shadow of pretext for complaint, had not deterred them from joining the enemies of the Empire, or intriguing against it whenever the opportunity occurred.

Eventually, after a heated and rather academical

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passage of arms between Edhem Pasha and Count Chaudordy, a further modification was made in the proposals, but not without a protest from General Ignatieff, who said: "You are plucking all my feathers out of me," to which Count Chaudordy replied, with pregnant truth, "You will always have plenty left, General." The finally irreducible minimum proposed was to the effect that a Consular Commission should be appointed to aid the local authorities, and that the Valis of the three provinces, Bulgaria, Herzegovina and Bosnia, should be appointed subject to the assent of the Great Powers, during the first five years.

The Turkish envoys, however, could not agree to this proposal either. They pointed out that the appointment of the Consular Commission was an infringement of the sovereign rights of the nation, *which it was beyond their competence to acquiesce in*, and that over and above this difficulty the proposal was open to the practical objection that an exceptional situation created for those provinces would cause discontent in all the other provinces of the empire, and lead to unrest, and probably disturbance, in some of them; and they again pointed out that the moment seemed singularly ill-chosen for insisting on special privileges for a portion of the Empire, when the Sultan had just promulgated a charter containing the largest possible measure of liberty and equal rights to all his subjects without distinction throughout every portion of the Empire.

This declaration of *non possumus* on the part of the Turkish delegates was followed by a most violent speech from General Ignatieff, immediately after which the assembly broke up without even listening to the protest that the Ottoman delegates were prepared to make to the speech of the Russian envoy.

The last modified proposal was embodied in an

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Ultimatum delivered to the Porte by the envoys collectively, to which an answer was required within a week. At the expiration of that time, if the answer was not satisfactory, they declared their intention of quitting Constantinople.

On the news of what had occurred becoming known, the conduct of the Turkish delegates was generally approved of throughout the Empire. Christians and Mahomedans vied with each other in sending patriotic addresses to the capital, and a battalion of Christian volunteers was raised, at their own expense, and marched to the Servian frontier, where they distinguished themselves greatly, let it be said in passing, by their courage and devotion.

Midhat, in the meantime, by the Sultan's order, had convened a Grand Council of 237 persons, composed of all nationalities and notabilities, to whom the final propositions of the Conference were submitted.

Midhat made a speech to the notabilities, in which he pointed out the consequences of the rejection of the terms in question, and told them clearly that unless they were prepared to face this *ultima ratio*, they had no alternative but to accept the terms of the Conference. After listening attentively to this speech, the Grand Council, by a practically unanimous vote, amidst very considerable enthusiasm decided on the rejection of the Ultimatum. The foreign envoys accordingly left the capital on 20th January (1877). So ended the Conference of Constantinople.

It is necessary here to recall the fact that Midhat during the Conference sent the patriot Odian Effendi to London to communicate to Lord Derby the occurrence which had recently taken place in his country, and to add that as the Powers had not insisted on the carrying out of the proposals formulated by Russia, which were found to be impracticable in the present condition

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of Turkey, it was hoped that the Powers would take the new Constitution under their protection, and see to its execution in practice. The following despatch from Lord Derby to Lord Salisbury and Sir H. Elliot shows the result of this step:—

The Earl of Derby to the Marquis of Salisbury and Sir H. Elliot.

"FOREIGN OFFICE,
"*10th January* 1877.

"MY LORD AND SIR,—Odian Effendi called upon me this afternoon by appointment, and spoke to me again of the impossibility which his Government felt of accepting the proposals made to them in the Conference.

"There might, he said, be concessions on both sides in regard to the reforms, but the question of the guarantees would still remain, and offered insuperable difficulties.

"Under these circumstances he was anxious to make a personal suggestion, which he thought might offer a mode of arrangement, and which he understood that Midhat Pasha was ready to adopt. It was that the Constitution recently decreed by the Sultan should be brought to the cognizance of the Powers in a form which should make its execution a matter of international obligation between the Porte and them, and that the organisation of the provincial administrations to be drawn up by the Turkish Ministers should, after receiving the approval of the Powers, be made a portion of the general plan, and embodied in the same agreement.

"The whole system of reforms granted by the Sultan to his subjects would thus be placed under the guarantee of the Powers, who would have a right to watch over the manner in which it was carried out.

"Odian Effendi wished to know whether this proposal would be favourably received by Her Majesty's Government, and whether I thought there would be any use in the Porte bringing it forward in the Conference.

"I told Odian Effendi in reply that there was a manifest inconvenience in discussing here the questions which at the same time were in process of negotiation at Constantinople. I must therefore refrain from expressing

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an opinion upon the plan which he had mentioned to me.

"If it was to be proposed by the Turkish Government, this must be done by them at Constantinople, and upon their own responsibility.[1]

"I am, etc.,

"(Signed) DERBY."

Hardly had the foreign envoys departed from the capital, and the doors of the great hall at the Admiralty been shut behind them, when the Palace proposed to put the match to the mine that had been carefully laid for the reformers.

Within a fortnight of the departure of the Plenipotentiaries, matters were brought to a climax. Two subjects of contention between Midhat and the Sultan had been reserved for further discussion when the Conference should be over: the position of Galib Pasha and the question of mixed schools. Either would serve for a *casus belli*.

Midhat had resolved on the dismissal of the complaisant Minister of Finance, who had, *proprio motu*, doubled the amount appropriated to the Civil list by the simple device of paying it in gold; there were other counts, too, against the Minister which necessitated this measure. One was the specific charge of irregularities in the accounts of the Treasury, which, although Midhat did not attribute them to malversation on his part, were nevertheless, in his opinion, proofs of great negligence in the supervision of the business of his office. The other was a general charge of incapacity as Minister of Finance, especially revealed in his tactless method of issuing Treasury bonds, thereby causing an excessive and alarming depreciation in the paper of the State. The Sultan had agreed to the dismissal of Galib, but he desired to have him forthwith appointed Senator, whereas Midhat

[1] Blue Book, *Turkey*, 2, 1877, No. 152.

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insisted on a preliminary examination of the accounts of his office. It will be perceived at once that there was a great deal more in this dispute than met the eye, and that it accounted for the bitterness of the feelings entertained against Midhat at the Palace. The following letter, if read between the lines, will throw some light on the questions at issue :—

To the First Secretary of His Majesty Said Pasha.

"EXCELLENCY,—By an Irade of our august Master, the nomination of his Excellency Galib Pasha as member of the Senate has just been adjourned. The delay on my part in making you acquainted with the motives which have determined me to remove Galib Pasha from the Ministry of Finance, whilst abstaining from any reflection whatever on his personal integrity, only emphasises the responsibility of Galib Pasha in the matter of finance. It is manifest that that faithful servant of the State, in conformity with the orders of our august Master, would not hesitate to admit his share of responsibility, and in order to put an end to a discussion which has no precedent, he should certainly claim an investigation, and submit to its consequences, whatever sacrifices it might entail; but since explanations are demanded of me, I hasten to give them as shortly as I can. In order to judge whether or not Galib Pasha is competent to administer the Finances of the State, it seems to me sufficient to refer to the fall in the value of paper money.

"The paper of the State, fifteen years ago, amounted to twenty millions (£T), and yet its depreciation never reached more than 50 to 60 per cent., compared to gold, although its circulation was then limited to the radius of the town of Constantinople, and it was not received in payment of taxes. At the present time, although the amount issued does not amount to four millions, and there is no limit imposed to its circulation in the Empire, and it is accepted in payment of taxes, the depreciation amounts to 70 per cent. This state of things is the result of the carelessness and neglect on the part of the ministers of Finance. The depreciation, moreover, has given rise to venality and corruption on the part of functionaries in the Provinces, and to excitement and unrest, in consequence, in public opinion.

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"We have no accusation to make against the probity and honesty of Galib Pasha, nor any complaint on the score of the obligation under which we lie, of issuing bonds to realise the sum necessary, in gold, for exportation to Europe for war purposes. But seeing that an issue of paper money, to an amount necessary for the realisation of £T100,000 only, is sufficient to cause a still further depreciation of the paper and rise in gold, the Minister of Finance is in duty bound to take such steps and employ such means as shall, as much as possible, prevent or mitigate this consequence. For instance, he should take a portion of the sum required from the receipts of the Treasury, in gold, and issue the remainder of the sum in paper, with such prudence and precaution as to avoid financial panic by all means in his power. But Galib Pasha seems incapable of appreciating such measures, and the finances of the State have suffered in consequence.

"Such a state of things implies a grave responsibility, and as it is somebody's duty to fix this responsibility, the functionary on whom devolves these particular duties would necessarily be the person to assume it. But it is also the duty of the person who happens to be Grand Vizier to superintend the general march of affairs, and to take steps to prevent all maladministration.

"In the report made by Galib Pasha, which was read before the Council of Ministers, he declares himself incapable of finding a remedy for this state of things. And when an official makes such a declaration, it is impossible to keep him in the exercise of those functions without sharing the responsibility with him. It is on these grounds that we have based our opinion as to the necessity of replacing him.

"The day after the issue of the Imperial Irade approving this decision, His Excellency Damad Mahmoud Djelaleddin Pasha advised us to recommend Galib Pasha for some other post; but it so happens that not only are the accounts in the treasury with reference to this paper money defective, but whereas we thought that only one million of paper money out of the proposed seven millions had actually been issued, we now find that two millions have in point of fact been issued.

"I thought it therefore proper, as I informed you in my letter of the 14 Moharem, 1294 to keep Galib Pasha in the office of Finance until all his accounts were put

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into proper order. In the discussion on these matters in the Council of Ministers, on the 6th day of Moharem, Galib Pasha informed us that he had made arrangements with some private bankers for the purchase of £T90,000 in gold against £T210,000 paper. This enormous depreciation, which could be accepted only in the event of the extremest urgency, seemed to us beyond all limits of reason.

"Whatever may be the personal honesty of an official, yet when such irregularities take place in his Office, it would seem more proper to request him first to put his accounts in order before appointing him off-hand to another position of trust, such as the Senate.

"On consideration of the whole matter, we are convinced that just as Galib Pasha's incompetence involves no reflection on his honesty and probity, so the matter of the £T90,000 which I have just mentioned is far from revealing any desire on his part to conceal the real situation of affairs.

"Hence the only reasons why we have requested a delay in the nomination of Galib Pasha to the Senate are founded on his own declarations last Wednesday before the Council of Ministers.

"Although this little matter is scarcely worthy of so lengthy an explanation, I have made it simply on the demand addressed to me to furnish explanations on the subject, and in order to comply with the Imperial commands.

"I will only, in conclusion, beg you very particularly to be good enough to bring these details to the notice of His Majesty, if he should express his desire to be made acquainted with them.

"Receive, Excellency, etc.,—

"MIDHAT.

"9 *Moharem* 1293, *Hegira*."
(*25th January* 1877.)

The other question held in reserve was that of the mixed schools, a measure to which, as we have seen on several occasions, Midhat attached the greatest importance, as a means of welding together the different elements of the nation. He desired to make a beginning by applying it to the military academies of the Empire. The eve, possibly, of a great war, in which the nation might require

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the service of all her sons, seemed to him the most opportune moment conceivable for the application of this most important reform. He accordingly pressed it on the Sultan. He was met by the ordinary Fabian tactics of the Palace—procrastination, promises, delay. The Sultan demurred, temporised, first gave and then withdrew his consent, and a long discussion ensued between them on the subject. The dispute culminated in the following Memorandum, addressed by Midhat in the name of the Ministry, to the Sultan, through the usual channel:—

To the First Secretary of His Majesty Said Pasha.[1]

"YOUR EXCELLENCY,—All sincere friends of Turkey continue to urge us—as did Mr Thiers quite lately—in the actual condition of affairs, to give proofs to Europe of our sincerity and good intentions. This very day a despatch from Musurus Pasha informs us that Lord Derby congratulates the Imperial Government on the dissolution of the Conference, which he considers as a success for Turkey. At the same time Lord Derby urges us to conclude peace with Servia as soon as possible, and to make a beginning in carrying out those articles of the Constitution, and those propositions of the Conference, that are susceptible of immediate application. And whilst we, taking these friendly counsels into very serious consideration, are working with a view of putting into operation without delay the Firmans concerning reforms, an Imperial Irade, promulgated yesterday, prohibits the admission of Christians into the military schools, which a preceding Irade had authorised. Now, such a prohibition is calculated seriously to compromise, from the very beginning, an important reform that the whole world expects from the Constitution, and it is natural that obstacles of this kind should discourage and paralyse the efforts that we are constantly making to serve our country with devotion. We therefore regret sincerely that of all the questions which are now placed on the order of the day to be studied by the Council, this important one alone remains in suspense, and we regret it all the more in-

[1] *Nineteenth Century*, January 1903.

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asmuch as the explanations that we addressed to His Majesty on the subject yesterday morning have remained unanswered. I therefore appeal to the Imperial goodwill, and beseech His Majesty to bring to bear on this question all the forethought and attention that it deserves.

"(Signed) MIDHAT.

"8 *Moharem* 1294, *Hegira*."
(*24th January* 1877).

Worn out by these tactics, Midhat determined to bring the matter to an issue, and make it what would be called a Cabinet question, and addressed to the Sultan the following letter:—

"SIRE,—The object of promulgating the Constitution was to abolish Absolutism, to indicate Your Majesty's rights and duties, to define and establish those of Ministers; in a word, to secure to the nation complete and entire liberty, and thus by a common effort to raise the condition and position of the country.

"Contrary to what had occurred in the case of former *Hatti Humayuns* promulgated thirty years back, the new charter was to subsist and receive its full application after the present political crisis should be at an end; for our object in promulgating that Constitution was certainly not merely to find a solution of the so-called Eastern Question, nor to seek thereby to make a demonstration that should conciliate the sympathies of Europe which had been estranged from us.

"Allow me, Sire, to offer a few observations on this subject. In the first place, Your Majesty, who is responsible before the nation for your acts, is bound to be acquainted with your duties as well as with your rights and prerogatives. It is, moreover, indispensable that Ministers should have the certain conviction of being able to accomplish their tasks, and that we should be able to free ourselves from that habit of servile flattery which has debased our people and ruined the country during the last four centuries.

"I am animated by a profound respect for the person of Your Majesty. But basing my conduct on the ordinances of the Cheri (sacred law), I am bound to withhold obedience to the commands of Your Majesty whenever they are not in conformity with the interests of the nation;

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otherwise the weight of my responsibility would be too heavy for me to bear. The dictates of my conscience that command me to conform my acts to the salvation and prosperity of my country impose an imperative obligation on me; and the judgment of my country, which is what I respect and cherish most, forbids me to act otherwise.

"I desire earnestly that no shadow of a suspicion should cross the mind of Your Majesty, and I dread, as I have already said, to find later on that I have sinned against my own conscience and deserved the malediction of my countrymen. It is this very apprehension that forces me to submit those considerations to Your Majesty. It is indispensable, Sire, that the Ottoman nation should have the power to reform and administer their country, according to the law. It is unnecessary for me to point out or explain to Your Majesty all that is contained in this phrase. I humbly pray and beseech Your Majesty to have confidence in me and my colleagues in the accomplishment of our difficult task, in which patriotism and love of our country are our only motives and inspiration.

"I trust that I have not as yet committed any act compromising the responsibility that I feel, and I desire that the nation should be imbued with the sense of our responsibility towards it, otherwise no satisfactory result can ever be attained.

"It is now nine days, Sire, since you have abstained from giving a favourable answer to my petition. You thereby refuse to sanction laws indispensable to the welfare of the country, and without which our whole previous work will be rendered futile. Whilst Your Majesty's Ministers are engaged in endeavouring to restore the governmental edifice which has with so much difficulty escaped total ruin, surely Your Majesty would not willingly add to the work of destruction.

"If Your Majesty should in consequence of the above named opinions consider it your duty to relieve me of my functions as Grand Vizier, I would pray Your Majesty to confide them into such strong hands as shall be able to reconcile the principles and ideas of Your Majesty with the necessities of the country and the gravity of the situation in which the Empire finds itself placed to-day.—I am, Sire, Your Majesty's humble servant,

"MIDHAT.

"*18th January* 1293, *O.S.*"
(*30th January* 1877.)

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For three days he abstained from going to the Palace.

The Sultan, who was now prepared for extremities, sent Safvet Pasha to him to inform him that all he demanded would be granted and to request him to come to the Palace. Safvet Pasha, Minister for Foreign Affairs, and one of the Turkish delegates at the Conference, was not what would be called a strong Minister. He was prone to conciliation and compromise rather than energetic measures and resolutions; but he was essentially an honest man: duplicity and treachery were absolutely foreign to his nature. If on this occasion he was intended as an instrument of duplicity, it was practised at his own expense, and he was merely an unconscious tool. Midhat, however, demurred to the invitation, and required the necessary Irades to be issued on the matters pending with the Palace, before he resumed his functions as Grand Vizier. Thereupon the Sultan sent his first aide-de-camp, Saïd (Ingless) Pasha, to him, to assure him that the Irades were ready, if he would, on the Sultan's order, accompany him to the Palace. Midhat went. He perceived on his way an unwonted display of troops in the district of Tavshan Tashi, where his Konak was situated, but he was not aware then, on the night of the 4th-5th February, that the Imperial Yacht *Izzeddine* was moored close to the marble steps leading up to the terrace of the Palace of Dolma-Bagtche. If he had perceived it and guessed its purpose, it was too late to retreat, or to escape the snare laid for him. On his arrival at the Palace he was shown into a small ante-chamber and told to await the Sultan's orders.

The first aide-de-camp soon returned with the Sultan's order to deliver up his seal of office, and to accompany him.

He then conducted him on board the *Izzeddine*, which, with steam already up, immediately weighed

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anchor and steamed off in the direction of the Sea of Marmora with Midhat on board. The Captain of the *Izzeddine* had sealed orders, which he was only to open in the Sea of Marmora. These orders were, that he should wait for twenty-four hours in the Bay of Tchekmedje, and if he received no telegram within that space of time, he was to conduct Midhat to any European port on the Mediterranean that the ex-Grand Vizier might select. No despatch arriving, he proceeded on his course to Brindisi, where he landed Midhat.

That the forcible banishment of the Grand Vizier was a violation of the letter as well as the spirit of the Constitution promulgated and sworn to by the Sultan, has never been seriously denied. The "reason of State" urged would obviously cover any act of arbitrary power whatever. It was for the express purpose of putting an end to such an arbitrary *régime* that the Constitution was framed and insisted on. The flimsy pretext put forward, that it was in accordance with the 113th Article of the Constitution, will not bear the most superficial examination. The power therein conceded to the Sultan was in a rider to a clause declaring a state of siege when the safety of the State required it, and the purport and limits of the clause must necessarily govern the subsidiary provisions of the clause itself. Not only could a rider of this description not bear the interpretation sought to be placed upon it, but other substantial clauses of the Constitution directly forbade the exercise of any such arbitrary power, and provided for the elementary right that no man should be punished except after due trial. But further: clauses 31, 32, and 34 contained special and minute provisions for the arrest and trial of Ministers guilty of treason or malversation, so that both positively and negatively, in its substantial provisions and in its omissions, the banishment of Midhat, with its attendant circumstances, was as clear a violation of the

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Constitution as the *coup d'état* of the 2nd December 1852 in France.

But political morality and good faith and patriotism apart, it must be allowed that the tactics pursued by the Palace were, *qua* tactics, very cleverly devised. If the Sultan had struck at the Constitution as well as the champion of it; at reform at the same time as the reformer, he would undoubtedly have raised a storm in the country which would have immediately endangered his throne; but by striking down the father and pillar of the Reformers he practically killed reform, and put the Constitution at his mercy as certainly as if he had suppressed it then and there; and whilst pretending himself to champion both reform and the Constitution, he managed to play the *rôle* of Wat Tyler successfully, and to take the sting out of the blow, and conceal the full meaning of the act that he had just committed. There was a party in Constantinople, to which personal ambition was not a stranger, who imagined that Midhat was not essential to the cause of the Constitution, and that Abdul Hamid II. was sincere in his protestations of reforming ardour. Some were of good faith, and some were simply moved by ambition. Both very soon discovered their mistake, and in various distant provinces found leisure to reflect and repent of their confiding innocence.

The Palace, although they had hazarded this great *coup*, did not feel at all secure as to the effect it might produce on the population of Constantinople, in spite of all the measures of precaution that had been taken; and the order given to the captain of the *Izzeddine* to remain twenty-four hours at anchor in the bay of Tchekmedje, was with a view, in case of a serious rising in the capital, of recalling Midhat and persuading him to resume his functions—until a more convenient opportunity arose. The Palace was playing for safety.

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Stunned by the suddenness of the blow, entirely unprepared for any concerted action, and distracted by reports industriously spread, the people did not rise, and the Palace breathed freely. It had gained a complete victory.

. . . . . .

Between the breaking up of the Conference and the breaking out of the war, the sequence of diplomatic action can be very briefly narrated. On the 19th January 1877 Prince Gortchakoff issued a Circular to the Powers, which can be summed up in the question, "What are you going to do about it?" One particular phrase, however, in this document must be noted. He says that the agreement in the Berlin Memorandum not being unanimous, and the crisis being aggravated, among other causes, by the revolution in Constantinople, the Cabinets recommenced negotiations, and, on the initiative of England, agreed upon a basis and guarantees to be discussed at a Conference at Constantinople. There is very little doubt that this revolution in Constantinople—which had the avowed object of checking absolutism and giving the Turkish people guarantees for good government—was in the eyes of Russia an aggravation of the crisis, and justified, and even necessitated, in her opinion, hostile action against Turkey. That Russia, who had undertaken the championship of liberty and progress among the inhabitants of a neighbouring empire, should be confronted by the establishment of institutions far more liberal and advanced than anything her own people were allowed to dream of; and that there should be sitting at Constantinople a Parliament, the very name of which was a terror and nightmare at St Petersburg, was without question an intolerable grievance.

À propos of this, the famous despatch of Count Pozzo di Borgo, of November 1828, to M. de Nesselrode, may be read with profit:

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"When the Imperial Cabinet examines the question as to whether the moment had arrived to take up arms against the Porte, some doubts as to the urgency of this measure might exist in the minds of those who had not sufficiently meditated on the effects of the sanguinary reforms that the Ottoman Chief had just executed with terrible energy. But now the experience that we have just had ought to unite everybody in favour of the line then adopted. The Emperor has put the Turkish system to the proof, and His Majesty has found in it a commencement of material and moral organisation which hitherto it has never possessed. If the Sultan has been enabled to oppose to us a more lively and sustained resistance whilst he had scarcely collected the elements of his new plans of reform and improvement, how much more formidable should we have found him if he had had time to give them more consistency and solidity? . . . ."

The whole policy of Russia towards Turkey is contained in the above despatch. The Cabinets of the Powers did not immediately answer Prince Gortchakoff's Circular of the 19th January. General Ignatieff took a circular journey round Europe and felt the pulses of its Governments. On the 13th March, Count Schouvaloff handed to Lord Derby the draft Protocol which it was proposed to submit to the signature of the Great Powers, so as "to terminate the incident." In this interview, the Russian Ambassador urged in favour of this course the unfortunate result that would ensue if shades of difference of opinion were to manifest themselves in the replies of the various Cabinets to the Russian Circular, which might be a determining cause to induce Russia to seek for a solution *either by means of a direct understanding with the Porte*, or by force of arms.

Lord Derby does not seem to have requested the Russian Ambassador to explain the above oracular utterance. There was more in it than he perhaps imagined. Another remarkable expression fell from Count Schouvaloff at this interview, and one which shows that he did not give

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himself the trouble, in his interview with the English Minister, to maintain even the appearance of consistency. "*As a period of some months would not be sufficient to accomplish these reforms*, it would be preferable," etc. But this was Mr Disraeli's and Lord Derby's contention, though not sustained, for postponing diplomatic action, and the Turkish Ministers were never tired of urging it as a good and valid reason for deferring the Conference altogether.

The Protocol that was signed at London on the 31st March 1877 was certainly, as compared with the Protocol of the Conference, a very colourless document. After recapitulating certain recent diplomatic acts and taking cognisance of certain others, in view of certain indications, "the Powers propose *to watch carefully* by means of their Representatives at Constantinople, and their local agents, the manner in which the promises of the Ottoman Government are carried into effect." It concluded by saying: "If their hopes should once more be disappointed, and if the conditions of the Christian subjects of the Sultan should not be improved in a manner to prevent the return of the complications which periodically disturb the peace of the East, they think it right to declare that such a state of things would be incompatible with their interests and those of Europe in general. In such case, they reserve to themselves the right to consider, in common, the means which they may deem best fitted to secure the well-being of the Christian population and the interests of the general peace."

This Protocol was accompanied by two remarkable declarations, annexed to the Minutes of the Meeting at the Foreign Office at which the Protocol was signed—the one on the part of the Russian Ambassador, the other on that of the English Minister.

The latter was to the effect that, in the event of

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the object for which the Protocol had been signed, viz., reciprocal disarmament and peace, not being attained, the Protocol in question should be regarded as null and void.

The declaration by the Russian Ambassador was in the following terms:—

"If peace with Montenegro is concluded, and the Porte accepts the advice of Europe and shows itself ready to replace its forces on a peace footing, and seriously to undertake the reforms mentioned in the Protocol, let it send to St Petersburg a special envoy to treat of disarmament, to which his Majesty the Emperor would also, on his part, consent. If massacres similar to those which have occurred in Bulgaria take place, this would necessarily put a stop to the measures of demobilization."

The Porte thought fit, perhaps unnecessarily, inasmuch as its adhesion to the Protocol was not required, to make on the 9th April 1877 a most elaborate and spirited answer to the position taken up by the signatories of that document.

It pointed out that the efforts of the Powers were exclusively directed to what they considered the well-being of one portion only of the Sultan's subjects, whereas the reforms which the new Constitution aimed at introducing did not bear a special or exclusive character in regard to province, race, creed or language. That the small account which the Powers seemed to have taken both of the great principles of equality and justice which the Turkish Government sought to introduce into the internal administration, and of its rights of independence and sovereignty, was deeply to be regretted. That Turkey as an independent State could not submit "to be placed under any surveillance, whether collective or not." That the Treaty of Paris explicitly declared the principle of non-intervention. That Treaty which binds the other high contracting parties as well as Turkey, cannot be abolished

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by a Protocol in which Turkey has taken no part. And as for the last clause, the Government of the Sultan saw in it "a proceeding of intimidation calculated to deprive their action of all merit of spontaneity, and a source of grave complication for the present as well as for the future."

With reference to the declaration of the Russian Ambassador annexed to the Protocol, the Porte very pointedly remarked that "as regards the disorders which might break out in Turkey and arrest the demobilization of the Russian army, the Sultan's Government, while resenting the offensive terms in which this idea has been expressed, believes that Europe is convinced that the disorders which have disturbed the tranquillity of the provinces were due to external agitation; that the Imperial Government cannot be held responsible for them, and that consequently the Russian Government will not be justified *in making the demobilization of its armies depend on such contingencies.*"

This last paragraph pointed out a serious practical difficulty that confronted the Ottoman Government with reference to the proposal for demobilization. Russia was supposed to be able to mobilise her armies in eight days: at any rate, it was a question of days with her. Turkey, on account of her geographical position, and the nature of her organisation, required several months to effect this object. If, therefore, after making the greatest sacrifices in order to collect her forces, she were now to dismiss them to their distant homes, and Russia were allowed, on a pretext indicated by herself, to remobilise her own army, Turkey would be caught at the greatest possible disadvantage, and would then be completely at the mercy of her unscrupulous opponent. And nothing would be easier than for Russia, employing the means at which she had shown herself an adept, to excite troubles which would give her the very justification which she sought for a systematic attack on

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the now defenceless Ottoman Empire. The Porte had had experience of this very same line of action and of argument in respect to Servia. On the 2nd November 1876, Sir H. Elliot writes to Lord Derby that "General Ignatieff told me this morning that he has been directed by his Government to inform the Porte that they would consider any excesses committed by the Turkish troops as a violation of the armistice; and one of the secretaries of the Russian Embassy was desired this afternoon to tell me, further, that the General had orders at once to leave Constantinople upon any violation of it occurring," and he adds, "a ready pretext for a rupture appears thus to be prepared." [1]

On the 19th April 1877, Prince Gortchakoff issued another Circular announcing a declaration of war against the Ottoman Empire, and concluding with the following most remarkable sentence: "In assuming this task, our august Master fulfils a duty imposed upon him by the interests of Russia, whose *peaceful development is hindered by the permanent disturbances of the East.*"

Commentary would spoil this choice bit. The lamb was troubling the stream.

On the 1st May, Lord Derby made a most caustic and merciless reply to the Russian Circular.

After pointing out that the Porte had never wavered "in affirming its intention of carrying out the reforms already promised," which was the avowed object of the Powers, and that by patience and moderation on both sides these objects might still have been attained, and that it was the presence of large Russian forces on the frontiers of Turkey, "menacing its safety, rendering disarmament impossible, and exciting a feeling of apprehension and fanaticism among the Mussulman population," that constituted a material obstacle to internal pacification and

[1] Blue Book, *Turkey*, 1, 1877, No. 985.

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reform. It went on to say, that the course on which the Russian Government had entered involved graver and more serious considerations. It was in contravention of the stipulation of the Treaty of Paris of 30th March, 1856, by which Russia and the other signatory Powers engaged, each on its own part, to respect the independence and the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire, and further, that they had, as late as 1871, signed a declaration at the Conference of London, affirming it to be "an essential principle of the law of nations that no Power can liberate itself from the engagements of a Treaty, nor modify the stipulations thereof, unless with the consent of the Contracting Parties by means of an amicable arrangement." It concluded by saying, in reference to the pretension that Russia was acting in the interest of Great Britain and of the other Powers, that it felt bound to state in a manner equally formal and public that the decision of the Russian Government was not one that could have their concurrence or approval.

Nothing could be more logical or reasonable, but it was not logic or reason that could keep the Russian armies on their side of the Pruth.

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CHAPTER VII

MIDHAT PASHA IN EUROPE

THE exile of Midhat Pasha to Europe, after his sensational downfall from power on 5th February 1877, caused very much excitement in Europe. The Emperor of Austria is reported to have exclaimed, "Good Heavens! these Turks are incorrigible!"; while M. Thiers said, "Turkey's most inveterate enemy could hardly have devised such a diabolical piece of advice to give to the Sultan." The Cabinets lost all hope of seeing reforms introduced into Turkey. The English, as well as the greater part of the European Press, showed their sympathy towards the ex-Grand Vizier and their discontent with the Sultan. Amongst the Russian newspapers the *Golos* of St Petersburg, 9th February 1877, whilst clearly showing the interest that Russia had in the disgrace of Midhat Pasha, yet expressed its opinions in the following manner :—

"The end of the Turkish Empire in Europe has come. All that is now wanted is patience, and waiting is not difficult, since war is impossible with a State which will perish more quickly by the effect of its internal crisis than through a foreign army. Russia will have time enough to save the Christians from the misfortune that might befall them through the fall of Turkey. It is now more to the advantage of Russia, as well as of the Christians, to wait and see how the course of Turkish decay will shape itself than to prolong the process of dissolution by interference."[1]

[1] *Times*, 10th February 1877.

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The exile of Midhat, and the consequent change in the Ministry, also caused the very greatest commotion throughout the greater part of the Turkish population.[1] But the Sultan had taken every precaution against the possibility of any insurrection on the part of the people in favour of the exiled Grand Vizier, and he hastened to assemble Parliament, in order that he might gain the credit of being considered even more liberal than his Grand Vizier; and to show that the downfall of Midhat by no means involved the abolition of the recently promulgated Constitution, he opened Parliament.

The opening of the new Parliament had been fixed for the 1st March, but owing to the fact that many of the deputies from the more distant provinces had not arrived in the capital, the ceremony was adjourned till the 4th March. On that day Parliament was opened with great ceremony by the Sultan in the Palace of Dolma-Bagtche.

On the right of the throne stood the Ministers and high functionaries, the Chiefs of the Christian communities, and members of the Council of State; on the left, the Ulema, and Cadi, and Heads of the High Courts of Justice, with

[1] Mr Blunt, H.B.M. Consul at Salonica, addressed the following despatch to Lord Derby:—

"SALONICA, 10*th February* 1877.

"MY LORD,

. . . . . .

"The leading men with whom I have conversed, and the people in general here, manifest much surprise and some irritation at the sudden dismissal of Midhat Pasha from the Grand Vizierate, in whom they had full confidence that he would carry out reforms.

"The prevailing impression here is, especially among the Turks, that the fall of this popular statesman has been prepared and effected by the Sultan's immediate *entourage*.

"In case there is any demonstration at Constantinople, in favour of Midhat Pasha, the popular feeling at Salonica would, I think, coincide with it.*—I have, etc., J. E. BLUNT."

* Blue Book, *Turkey*, 15, 1877. No. 171.

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the Generals of Division; behind these the pages of the Court. Behind the throne were the Foreign Representatives, and interspersed between the groups on the right and left of the throne were the Senators and Representatives in the Parliament. The Sultan entered, dressed in black, and stood by the throne with his hand on his sword, whilst his First Secretary read the following Opening Speech :—

The Sultan's Speech.

"SENATORS AND DEPUTIES, — GENTLEMEN, — The difficulties and dangers which our general situation presents cannot be compared to any of the crises through which the Empire has hitherto passed. I was obliged, first of all, in order to guard the rights of the Empire, to augment the effective force of our armies at various points, and to call under arms 700,000 combatants. Next I considered it a duty to try, by means of essential reforms, to put an end, with God's help, to the disorder of the situation, and thus to insure our future in a permanent fashion. It is evident that, thanks to the resources with which Providence has endowed our country, and the aptitudes of our subjects, a good administration would enable us in a short time to make considerable progress. If we have not reached the level of progress of other parts of the civilised world, the cause of this must be traced to the instability of the institutions necessary to the State, and of the laws and regulations issuing therefrom. This instability proceeded from everything being in the hands of an absolute Government, which disregarded the salutary principle of common deliberation. The progress effected by civilised States, the security and wealth they enjoy, are the fruit of the participation of all in the enactment of laws and in the administration of public affairs. This is why we thought it necessary to seek in that course the means of arriving at progress, and of enacting and enforcing laws adopted by the common consent of the population. For this purpose I have granted and promulgated the Constitution. By the promulgation of the Constitution, I have not simply designed to invite the population to share in the direction of public affairs; I have had the firm resolution of employing the deliberative

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system as an effective means for the amelioration of the administrative system of the country, to preserve it from maladministration and absolutism. Irrespective of these fundamental advantages, the Constitution guarantees the unity of the governed, and confirms the principle of the welfare and fraternal solidarity of the population; for our illustrious ancestors, having, by God's grace, extended their possessions and aggrandised the Empire, have combined under their rule a large number of peoples. These peoples being of various nationalities and religions, it was desirable that a uniform law should unite and protect them all. I give thanks to Divine Providence for this legitimate aspiration being at length realised. Henceforth all my subjects will be considered children of the same country, and will be placed under the protection of one law. They will be designated by the name borne by the illustrious race of the Founders of the Empire—a name associated with the glorious annals of a history of 600 years. I have a firm conviction that from this moment all my subjects will unite their efforts to make the name Osmanli retain the force and power hitherto surrounding it. I am therefore resolved, in view of this ideal and these reasons, not to deviate from the course which I have just adopted, and ever to adhere closely to it. I expect from you a real and intelligent co-operation, in order to derive legitimate benefit from the Constitution, which is based on justice and the public security. I have deemed it necessary to insure to all the advantages of liberty and equality, to abolish the system of arbitrariness, to enact and execute laws adopted in common accord with the population, and, lastly, to found our administrative system on constitutional and liberal principles. It is in order to realise this sincere desire that I have created and convoked your body, composed of the Senate and Chamber of Deputies. It now devolves on you faithfully and honestly to fulfil the legislative duties intrusted to your patriotism. In this task you should not be influenced by any personal considerations, but have in view only the faithful maintenance of the safety and welfare of the State and country. The improvements which we now need, and the reforms in all the public services, are of the highest importance. The gradual application of these measures depends on the accord which shall prevail among you. The Council of State is engaged in framing Bills which will be submitted to you. In the present Session you will have before you Bills on the Standing

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Orders of the Chamber, the Electoral Law, the General Law respecting the Vilayets and the Government of the Communes, the Municipal Law, the Civil Code of Procedure; the laws relative to the re-organisation of the Tribunal and the mode of promoting and superannuating Judges, the Law concerning the functions and retiring pensions of all public functionaries in general, the Law of the Press, that respecting the Court of Accounts, and, lastly, the Budget Law. I desire that these different Bills be successively studied and discussed. You will have especially to occupy yourselves with the re-organisation of the Tribunals, the only safeguard for the rights of everyone, and with the formation of the *gendarmerie*. In order to attain this end, it will be necessary to augment the amount of special grants for these two branches of the Service. As you will see from the Budget which will be submitted to the Chamber, our finances are in an extremely difficult situation. I recommend you, above all, to adopt common measures adapted to meet the difficulties of the situation and to restore our credit. You will have moreover, to take measures to insure the supply of funds required for urgent reforms. One of the greatest wants of our Empire and of our subjects is the development of agriculture and industry, and the progress of civilisation and of public wealth. This result can only be obtained by means of the development of public instruction. Measures with the object of improving educational establishments, and of fixing the programme of studies, will be submitted to the Chambers in the Session of next year. The Imperial Government attaches the greatest importance to the choice and appointment of the functionaries who will be called upon to apply and execute the above-mentioned laws and those which will be ultimately promulgated for the working of the Constitution. Since my accession to the Throne I have given particular attention to this question. It is for this reason that I have decided on instituting, at my own expense, a special school for the education of administrative officials. As stated by the published organic regulations of that school, they will be admitted to the highest administrative and political posts. The pupils will be selected without distinction of religion, from all classes of my subjects. Their promotion will be according to the degree of their capacity. For nearly two years we have had to face internal complications. During this period, especially during the hostilities with Servia and Montenegro,

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our faithful subjects have given proofs of patriotism, and our troops have done, at the price of great suffering, acts of courage and bravery which I profoundly appreciate. In all questions we have only had the defence of our rights in view. The efforts we have made for this purpose have had the result of restoring peace with Servia. As to the decision we shall take in the negotiations with Montenegro, it will be referred to your deliberations at their first sitting. I advise you to be prompt in deciding. Our relations with friendly Powers are still marked by that courtesy and deference which are among the most precious rules for our State. Several months ago the Government of England proposed the meeting of a Conference in our capital for the consideration of the present questions. The bases proposed being also supported by the other Great Powers, our Sublime Porte consented to the meeting of the Conference. Though a definite understanding was not obtained in that Conference, we have given proofs of our sincere desire to defer to the wishes and counsels of friendly Powers. As to the causes of the non-agreement of the Conference, these lay rather in the form and the mode of execution than in the substance. I thoroughly appreciate the imperative necessity of continuing the efforts for progress, by which so much has already been achieved, from the origin of the *Tanzimat* till this time, in all branches of the administration, and in the general condition of my Empire. All our efforts still tend towards that object. But on this occasion I considered it my duty to preserve the country from all attacks on its honour and independence. Time will prove the sincerity of our intentions. Our desire being in all cases to maintain our rights and independence, we adopt also for the future the same line of conduct. I rejoice to think that the proofs of moderation and sincerity furnished by our State, before and after the Conference, will have served to strengthen the bonds of friendship and sympathy which unite my Empire to the Concert of European Powers. May the Almighty deign to grant success to our common efforts!"

Thus, against his will, the Sultan had been obliged to keep his word and to open the Chamber of Deputies, but he now left no means untried in order to deprive the people of the privilege which he had just granted them.

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It so happened that events occurred which furnished him with certain opportunities, of which he took advantage with the greatest astuteness, and which were very much to the detriment of the nation.

The refusal of the Porte and of the Grand Council to accept the propositions formulated at the Conference had placed Turkey in an exceedingly critical position, although the whole civilised world, with the exception of Russia and the Sultan Abdul Hamid, were convinced that this refusal was of no great importance, since the solemnly proclaimed Constitution had assured the Empire that the necessary reforms should be made, and that the maladministration should be brought to an end. Nevertheless, the fall of Midhat, of the very man to whom the empire owed this Constitution, gave rise to doubt as to the execution of the promised reforms. On 19th April, Prince Gortchakoff sent out his Circular to the Powers, and on the 24th of April hostilities were begun by Russia.

Public opinion in Turkey was thus entirely engrossed by the danger with which the empire was threatened from outside, and was no longer able to concentrate itself on the changes that were taking place in the internal government. All minds were excited at the near approach of Russia, and were unable to occupy themselves in the maintenance of those rights which had been conferred by the new charter. The Sultan was thus able to attain his object, and finding no longer any obstacle to his will, he closed the Parliament and exiled the few deputies who dared to raise their voice in protest.

The war declared by Russia was the necessary result of the policy which Abdul Hamid had proposed to follow. Having exiled Midhat Pasha, and closed Parliament without having executed a single reform, he was equally

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obliged to crush every liberal tendency in order that he might monopolise the supreme power, and spared no effort to rid himself of every force that was capable of thwarting his designs. He now began to get secret information as to the opinions of all the principal Ministers and Generals, and took care at once to deprive of all power those whom he feared might be dangerous to him. The contradictory instructions that he gave to the Generals, the absurd military orders that he issued from his Palace of Yildiz, were transmitted after reports which attributed revolutionary designs to certain of his Generals —designs which they were far from cherishing—had reached him.

It was in consequence of these suspicions on the part of the Sultan that the Commander-in-Chief Abdul Kerim and the Marshal Suleiman Pasha were brought before a Council of War and condemned, *not* on account of faults committed, but simply because one of these two chief officers had participated in the deposition of the Sultan Abdul Aziz, and the other was known to have liberal opinions.

The Sultan's efforts were crowned by the Treaty of San Stefano. The Circular of Prince Gortchakoff, which had appeared in the Official Journal of St Petersburg on the 9th April 1877, showed that what Russia had wished to obtain from Turkey by the Conference of Constantinople, differed but very little from the conditions which she imposed on the Porte in the Treaty of San Stefano, a fact to which Lord Salisbury rendered due justice in his despatch of 1st April.

Although the Cabinet of Great Britain had firmly stated its intentions of not entering into the quarrel, the general interests of Europe and the special interests of England were so deeply involved in the dispute, that it

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was impossible for that Power not to be obliged sooner or later to take some share in the proceedings. The intervention of England, although unhappily it came rather late in the day, led to the Congress of Berlin, which blotted out the Treaty of San Stefano.

As Midhat Pasha, however, played no part in the Russo-Turkish War, nor in the events that followed, we will pass over them, and relate the vicissitudes of his journey in Europe, including the interviews which he had with the heads of States and celebrated politicians.

Midhat arrived at Brindisi, 11th February, 1877, and after a few days' rest left for Naples, where he had at first wished to live, withdrawn from the world and its capitals. The following statement, which we reprint from the *Neue Freie Presse* of Vienna, was made by him on the future of the Constitution :—

"It is not despotism which, by my banishment, has reacted against the constitutional *régime*. That is not at all the case. Montesquieu has taught us that the creation of a constitution is very difficult and takes much time. A sovereign prince, accustomed to absolute power, can only be persuaded little by little to abandon his prerogatives, that being necessary to the constitutional *régime*. It is a difficult task, frequently interrupted by contrary currents, but for all that one need never despair of reaching the goal, for with time, patience and perseverence success is attainable. It is not in the person of the Sultan, nor yet through his present Ministers, that I see danger for the Constitution, but rather in the want of character and of courage so often to be found in those who are the Sovereign's Councillors, and who, instead of acting according to their convictions, seek their own advantage in hiding the truth. I have never hesitated about giving my opinion to the Sultan, whoever he might be, whenever it happened to differ from his; I have always done so with the greatest respect, but also without the least reticence. Many a misfortune might have been avoided in this world of ours if there had not been a great lack of men, capable of placing the whole truth before their Sovereign.

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"The danger to the Constitution lies, not in the lack of goodwill, but in the ignorance as to how to manage the mechanism. The Governmental form of despotism reminds me somewhat of a primitive mill, which may be turned by the force of water, or may equally be turned by its wheel. Constitutional Government also resembles a mill—but one that is put in movement by a complicated and artistically constructed mechanism. A knowledge as to how to work this machine and to keep it in movement is absolutely necessary. Thus, we must hope that the men of experience who find themselves at the head of affairs at Constantinople will not put the machinery of the new mill in motion, in accordance with the ideas and routine of the primitive mill. Constitutional Government cannot have the customs and the men of the Despotic system as its motive power. Reshid Pasha, our great reformer, was one day reproached for employing young men who had only just left college; he replied that it was right that it should be so, as neither one man alone, nor yet ten, could possibly do everything, and that it was therefore necessary to prepare a fresh staff of administrators. This has always been my idea, and whenever I have seen many rivals around me, I have delighted in the thought that it was to the profit of my country.

"If a man would render real and genuine services to his Sovereign and his Nation, he must be *patriotic*, and very much depends upon the way in which each person interprets this word. As for me, I consider that man to be a true patriot who, renouncing his own private interests, devotes himself morally and physically to one supreme aim—the welfare of his country. One must be willing to renounce everything—to be ready at a moment's notice to sacrifice happiness, family, and life itself for what one realises to be the good of the Fatherland.

"I have frequently been in a position in which I might have remained Minister, or have acquired vast wealth, and so have been able to end my days in the midst of luxury and covered with honours. But such is not my idea of patriotism.

"The esteem, love and sympathy of my nation have been always valued by me far above all other favours and all the splendours of this world. I could not remain a Minister when my Sovereign refused to allow me to act as I thought necessary for the honour and welfare

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of my country, and I prefer poverty and exile to the swords of honour, the diamonds and highest favours; and to be held in esteem by my compatriots is to me the proudest and keenest satisfaction."

Events in the East having now begun to assume a more and more threatening aspect, Midhat felt he could not possibly remain in inactivity at Naples, in the face of all the troubles that assailed his country. He went to Paris, and thence he crossed to London. He was the subject of the warmest welcome in each of the two capitals. Although an exile, he worked his hardest to find some favourable issue, and to deliver his country from the risk she ran in the Russian War. His friendly relations with Lord Beaconsfield and with the other English statesmen did not fail to produce some good effects in helping to save his country from an unjust war. When he had seen that the English Government were disposed to offer their good office for the promotion of an honourable peace, he left London for Vienna, where he was granted an audience by the Emperor Francis Joseph. On receiving news of the resistance offered by the Turkish army to the Russians, he addressed the following telegram to the Sultan Abdul Hamid:—

To H.M. First Secretary, Saïd Pasha.

"During my stay in London, I have tried to employ all my feeble efforts in favour of the Empire's cause, and to obtain an honourable peace. I flatter myself that I have achieved some results. Now that I am at Vienna I am desirous of acting in the same way, subject of course to the approval of His Imperial Majesty, but it naturally goes without saying that in order that my efforts may be crowned with any measure of success, I must be to some extent acquainted with His Majesty's plans, so that guided by the intentions of the Government,

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I may, to the best of my ability, render those services which are necessary in the crisis through which we are passing.—I am, etc., MIDHAT."

(1877.)

The Sultan informed him in reply that he would never accept peace, and he would refuse to listen to any *pourparlers* on this subject, and that he did not hesitate to declare that any man who should contemplate such a step was far from being a true patriot.

Midhat Pasha, seeing that peace was impossible, returned to London, where he never wearied of striving by every means in his power to be of assistance to his country. The Sultan, on his side, was doing his best to vilify Midhat's name in his own capital, and it is this that elicited the following letter from him to the Grand Master of Ceremonies, Kiamil Bey.

To Kiamil Bey, Grand Master of Ceremonies.

"DEAR SIR,—I am thoroughly aware of how anxious you must be to avoid a correspondence with me in my present disgrace, but I must ask your indulgence for the few lines that I find myself obliged to address to you.

"It has been brought to my knowledge that the publication of a letter in one of the newspapers of Constantinople has given rise to various attacks directed against me. I know very well that if an exile, instead of seeking for indulgence and pity, dares to make use of the language of criticism as to the acts of the Government, in such a way as to provoke the enmity of certain personages, he will not even be able to avoid hurting his friends. But as these observations only relate to the defence of my own personality, it would be better to pass them over in silence, for there is no greater crime than to be occupied with one's own individuality whilst the State is in the midst of such serious dangers. I believe that no one who has studied my letter can deny that it only contains the absolute truth. If there

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is a certain crudeness to be found therein, it comes from the truth of the words. If I have been able to remain indifferent to the attacks of my enemies, who for more than a year have done their best to injure me in the eyes of His Majesty by inserting articles and pamphlets against me in the newspapers, it is also in my power to bear with patience the vexatious attacks against my character. But no one must be surprised that the right of nationality which I possess in common with thirty-six million fellow-countrymen prevents me from keeping silence whilst our country is in the midst of such terrible vicissitudes, and our Ministers are involved in such great difficulties. Yet time presses, and the perilous situation, which has been dreaded for more than forty years, draws nearer and nearer. It is therefore the duty of every child of the country to let his complaint be heard and to lay his fears before his Sovereign. Those to whom the door of access to the Sovereign is closed must naturally employ every possible means by which their words may reach him. It is high time to realise that to place the truth before a Sovereign is an act of fidelity, and to hide it is a felony. Recent events have successively shown us the faults of those who are opposed to the wise measures which had been recognised by our Sovereign as necessary to save the Nation and the Government, and, putting aside all personal enmity, I am tempted to believe that they will profit by the goodwill of our august Sovereign and devote all their efforts to the good of the country. I end this letter with a request to you to be indulgent towards my expressions, which are free from all adulatory emphasis.—I am, etc.,

"MIDHAT.

"27 *Zilhidje* 1294, *Hegira*."
(*November* 1877.)

The Sultan, beginning to fear lest his former Grand Vizier's sojourn in Europe should prove a danger to him, decided to recall him. We publish the following correspondence which passed between the Grand Master of Ceremonies and Midhat Pasha on this subject, and which resulted in the return of the latter to Turkey and his tragic death. Midhat committed a great error in

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accepting the reversal of his exile, an error which has cost the Party of Reform at the very least twenty years of progress.

Letter from Kiamil Bey, Grand Master of Ceremonies, to Midhat Pasha, in exile.

"YOUR HIGHNESS,—His Majesty having questioned me some time ago on Your Highness' situation, I replied that you were wandering, sad and dispirited. As to your means of subsistence, I stated that you were living on what you borrowed. His Majesty, on whom these facts made the deepest impression, and who was much touched, shed tears and wished to send Your Highness at once the sum of £T1000, to provide for your absolute necessities. But I took the liberty of saying that it was first of all necessary to ask how the money should be sent, and also if you would wish to appoint someone to draw it —and then to act accordingly. What I have just related to you is only known to His Majesty, Your Highness, and to me, and must be kept secret. His Majesty even went so far as to say—'The poor man was deceived.' As to Your Highness' present situation, it may come to a happy termination through a correspondence with your humble servant, according to the Imperial desire. I shall await with impatience the immediate reply of Your Highness to this letter, as well as a letter of thanks for the favour which Your Highness has received from His Majesty.

"I am, etc.,

"KIAMIL.

"*13th-25th November* 1293 (1877.)

"*P.S.*—His Majesty repeatedly enjoined that all that I have just told you should be kept secret."

Letter from Midhat Pasha in reply to Kiamil Bey, Grand Master of Ceremonies.

"MY VERY DEAR SIR,—I have received your letter of November 13th. I was at first surprised and astonished to find that a friend, who ever since my departure from Constantinople had taken care not to send me even a simple greeting, should now have the courage to write

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me a letter with his own hand; but after having read it I understood the motive. Thank you for having wished to attract the Imperial kindness towards me, and for having replied—'He wanders, sad and dispirited,' to the question that His Majesty kindly put to you. But at the same time I must point out to you that these words are used for the unhappy and the bewildered. If His Majesty has sent me away from Constantinople and exiled me to Europe, it was in order to put an end to the calumnies which were spread against me in Constantinople, where my presence caused a certain amount of anxiety. As it is neither in keeping with the dignity of the State nor yet with the Imperial will that a man who has occupied the highest rank in the Government, and who has so frequently received the public proofs of the Imperial favour, should be treated as one who wanders bewildered through foreign countries, I think you would have been nearer the truth and also have better pleased His Majesty had you said, 'Midhat Pasha has retired to Naples, where he is praying for the happiness of the Sultan.'

"As to the rest of your letter, I must beg you to excuse me before I begin to comment on it. You know that I am the son of Hadji Echref Effendi, and that I have no other protector than God. I have worked very hard to acquire knowledge and virtue, but I have not succeeded. I own that my capacities and accomplishments are inferior to those of my colleagues. Now, if under these circumstances I have still been able to reach a rank so much above my merits, it can only be thanks to my plain dealing; and all the difficulties that I have met with during my life, are entirely due to my having spoken the truth. . . . What has happened, and to what is it due that I have been deceived? It was necessary that there should be a Sovereign at the head of the State after the Sultan Abdul Aziz, and, in accordance with the law, he was succeeded by the Sultan Murad. He became ill—was deposed—and, still in accordance with the law, the Sultan Abdul Hamid ascended the throne. It has been recognised that he manifested a sincere desire and also the necessary capacity to lead the State into the paths of progress; he showed much esteem for everyone, and his esteem and benevolence for me were prodigious. In the report which the late Mustapha Fazil Pasha laid before the Sultan Abdul Aziz, it is stated that the truth is always the last to gain admittance into the palace of Sovereigns, and

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indeed this is the case. But the more dangerous the word of truth, the more profitable is the result when it is spoken to the Sovereign in the hope of serving the State. This is the reason why, subordinating my private opinions to the public interests, I have never failed to speak the truth, and have never hesitated to point out clearly which was the way of salvation, and which path would lead to the destruction of our country. Men of evil intention have, I know, made use of this as a weapon against me, but all the events of to-day are proving one by one how just were my words. Unhappily, there are certain personages who, instead of trying by every means to save their country in the present dangerous situation, think only of their own private interest, and desiring to preserve their prestige, have committed serious faults, which are incompatible with humane feeling and quite impossible to correct. And by these acts not only have they created a bad name for themselves, but they have been the principal cause of the destruction of the empire. I can, however, only be grateful to His Majesty, and ever since my departure from Constantinople, wherever I have been, I have never ceased to repeat with fervour how good are His Majesty's intentions. Those who know the constancy of my words and deeds will realise that there is no other course possible to me. My most ardent desire at present is to see my country delivered from the horrors of war—my own personal consideration can only hold a secondary place in my thoughts.—I am, dear Sir, etc.,

"MIDHAT.

"28*th November* 1293, *O.S.*"
(10*th December* 1877.)

Letter from Kiamil Bey, in reply to Midhat Pasha.

"YOUR HIGHNESS,—I hope that Your Highness has perfectly recognised from the tone of my letter from what source it came. I was expecting to hear some expressions of gratitude from Your Highness, but your reply has in no way fulfilled this expectation, and you have ruthlessly exposed the real state of affairs without giving the least consideration to the shades of meaning in my expressions. This has been a great grief to me, and has diminished the hope I had of seeing you aiding the course of progress. In certain circles it is suggested that Your

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Highness may be waiting for a change in the Khalifat. I have been in Egypt for some months for change of air, and if you should wish to answer me, I would beg you to address your letters to me in Egypt.—I am, etc.,

"KIAMIL.

"*24th December* 1293, *O.S.*"
(*6th January* 1878).

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CHAPTER VIII

THE RETURN OF MIDHAT PASHA TO TURKEY

AFTER having received the most sympathetic welcome in Europe, and above all, in London, during a period of seventeen months, Midhat Pasha yielded to the Sultan Abdul Hamid's invitation and returned to Turkey, thereby disregarding the wise advice given him by his friends both at home and abroad, but declaring that he would sooner die in his own country than in a foreign land. He refused to accept any office, and only desired to be allowed to live quietly with his family, far from all politics and public affairs. He fixed upon Crete as his place of residence. During his exile in Europe he had seen the Sultan Abdul Hamid enter into the paths of despotism—giving power to those men who had done nothing in the past, and banishing from the capital all those who were his partisans and who had striven to establish a rule of justice and of progress. He had seen his country menaced by every danger, and had observed the manœuvres of those ambitious statesmen who only sought for their own personal interests in the Sultan's despotism and in their country's decadence. He had seen the destruction of all he had worked for, had seen the Constitution he had done so much to establish deprived of every authority, and become only a name in the official records.

The position that Midhat occupied after his return

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to Turkey, may be considered as an exile imposed upon him by the Sultan. Abdul Hamid was anxious to keep him in Turkey, but at the same time did not dare to keep him there in inactivity, fearing lest the leader of the Liberal Party should once more begin to occupy himself in obtaining the necessary measures for opening the Chamber of Deputies. He was well aware that Midhat, as the Governor of a province, would devote himself entirely to its re-organisation, and would therefore have no time in which to concern himself with central administration. Thus, in accepting the Governor-Generalship of Syria and of Smyrna, it will be seen that Midhat played no political *rôle*. Forced as he had been to accept these posts, he occupied himself completely in their administration and in the good management of their current affairs, thoroughly realising his position as an exile.

Before returning to Turkey, Midhat Pasha went to the Island of Crete, as his future residence. The Sultan granted his request, and sent a cruiser of the Turkish Fleet to Syria, which landed him at Candia on 11th September 1878; the Imperial yacht *Fuad* was also commanded to transport his family to the island.

The Cretan population, Mussulmans and Christians alike, gave him the warmest and most cordial of welcomes; the foreign fleets which were in the bay fired salutes when he disembarked.

This enthusiastic reception, this spontaneous manifestation on the part of the foreign fleets, made the very worst of impressions on Abdul Hamid, whose fears were, moreover, increased by the continual intrigues of Midhat's enemies. At one time there was some question at Constantinople of nominating Midhat Pasha as Governor-General of the Island of Crete. One of his friends (an English subject, whose name we may not divulge) sent

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him the following letter, written at the invitation of the British Ambassador, Sir Henry Layard:—

"CONSTANTINOPLE, *3rd October* 1878.

"YOUR HIGHNESS,—I have had an interview with our Ambassador this morning. His Excellency assures me that for the last four months he has tried by every means in his power to act on the Sultan's mind, in order to persuade His Majesty to believe in your fidelity and devotion to his throne. Sir Henry Layard has assured me that he has incontestable proofs, that whilst Your Highness was in power, a certain individual, who dined every evening at your table, was in the pay of General Ignatieff, and repeated to the General every day all that you had said the night before. His Excellency has asked me to tell you that His Majesty is always surrounded by Russian emissaries, who do all in their power to influence him against you, and therefore he is obliged to use the greatest prudence in speaking to His Majesty of Your Highness. The Ambassador expressed to me his very great regret that you had refused to accept the thousand pounds that the Sultan had offered you. He also wished me to tell you, *in strictest confidence*, that there had been some question of nominating you Governor-General of Crete, and that he prevented this nomination, being convinced that you would do no good in the Island, and that the insurrection instead of diminishing will only increase later on. Besides this, he told me that his desire is that Your Highness should occupy a higher post, where you would render very great services to the Government. He said that he was very anxious to meet you somewhere and to speak with you, but that at the present moment he sees no possibility of such an interview; in the meanwhile, if Your Highness would put yourself into correspondence with him, there is nothing that would give him greater pleasure than to receive news of you.

"Such, Your Highness, is the *résumé* of our conversation. I left with the conviction that the Ambassador sees the immense difficulty of introducing any reforms into the country without Your Highness' co-operation. Your opinion on the policy of England, and on the manner of introducing reforms into this country, would, I am sure, be very much appreciated by his Excellency, and there-

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fore, if you see fit to write to the Embassy, you may count on my honour that no one in the world will know that you are in correspondence with Sir Henry Layard.—I am, etc."

No event worthy of record took place during the short time that Midhat passed in the island of Crete. As he had wished, he lived peacefully in the midst of his family, not occupying himself directly with the affairs of State.

At the end of a month, Midhat Pasha received a telegram from the Palace, which nominated him Governor-General of the vilayet of Syria. He was compelled to accept this new post, and embarked with his family on board the Imperial yacht *Fevayid*, for Beyrout.

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CHAPTER IX

MIDHAT PASHA, GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF SYRIA

THE arrival of Midhat Pasha in Syria was greeted by the population with as much enthusiasm and sympathy as in Crete. Compelled to accept this new position, Midhat, without losing hope of obtaining better results, and without taking into consideration that this post of Governor-Generalship was a distinct loss of position after the high posts which he had occupied, began at once to study the general situation of the country, and the improvement which it would be possible to introduce there, as he had already done in the other vilayets. He introduced the most urgent reforms in the administration, which he discovered to be in a state of complete anarchy. He founded a School of Arts and Crafts, and an Orphanage, he increased the public safety, constructed high-roads, which diminished the long distances that separated the capital of the vilayet from the outlying districts, and contributed to the construction of a line of tramways which connected the town of Tripoli, in Syria, to the port of Mina.

However, the population of Syria, composed as it is of people of diverse races and religions, who are always at enmity with each other, had preserved their ancient manners and customs. The overwhelmingly difficult task of creating a complete union between all these jarring elements, and of strengthening the Ottoman Supremacy in the country—where the minds of the popu-

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lace were excited by foreign influences—consisted at first in the re-organisation of the administration, in Judicial and Financial Reforms, and, finally, in insisting upon the absolute integrity of the officials.

Meanwhile, the Sultan Abdul Hamid allowed his original bitterness against Midhat Pasha to increase, and although addressing the most flattering words to him, he refused to sanction every single scheme of reform brought forward by him. The more the people showed their very great sympathy towards the Governor-General, so much the more furious was the Sultan at his growing popularity. In order to prevent Midhat from gaining the friendship of the people by introducing the required improvements, Abdul Hamid took care to appoint as officials in Syria those men who would be capable of opposing his projects on every side. Such was the hostile conduct of the Marshal Ahmed Eyoub Pasha, who was in command of the Fifth Army Corps, and also of General Djémil Pasha.

The absence of harmony which existed between the officials of the province, and the Sultan's delay in sanctioning his schemes, finally obliged Midhat to tender his resignation in the following telegrams, to which the Sultan replied in the most hypocritical language.

To Aii Fuad Bey, H.M. First Secretary.

"Worn out, physically and mentally, by a service to the State which extends over nearly forty years, and taking into consideration my old age, which renders me incapable of serving any longer, I beg His Majesty, as a favour, graciously to accept my resignation of the Governorship of Syria, and to allow me to return, as soon as possible, to my house at Constantinople, or to Metelin, or else to some habitable district of the Syrian coast, where I may settle down with my family and spend my remaining years.—I am, etc.,

"(Signed) MIDHAT.

"*7th October* 1295, *O.S.*"
(*19th October* 1879.)

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To the Grand Vizier, Saïd Pasha.[1]

"Having reached a condition, when mentally and physically I can render no further services to the State, I had some weeks ago prepared my resignation and was going to send it in, for urgent reasons, when your nomination to the Grand-Vizierat retarded my action. But the appointment of Mahmoud Nedim Pasha[2] to the Ministry of the Interior has decided me to present it at the Palace. I inform you of this in advance, so that my resignation, following on your appointment as Prime Minister, may not be misinterpreted. I beg you will support my petition, and be my intermediary in helping me to get permission to end my days in some suitable place, with my family.—I am, etc.,

"(Signed) MIDHAT."

Reply from H.M. First Secretary.

"YOUR HIGHNESS,—His Majesty has taken note of Your Highness' resignation of the Governorship of Syria.

"The success which has attended Your Highness in the vilayet of Syria has been reported to His Majesty by Sir Henry Layard, who has just returned from his travels in Syria. His Majesty was on the point of sending you his congratulations, and of asking you what measures should be taken for the application of those reforms in which you encounter some obstacles. The arrival of your resignation has caused regret to His Majesty. You declare that the principal reason of your resignation is your advanced age, but as Your Highness is well aware, the longer an official has served, so much the greater will be his experience and his competency. Now, just at the moment when the State is on the point of reaping the fruits of Your Highness' long experience and high efficiency, your decision to withdraw from public affairs cannot agree with the sentiments of your well-known patriotism, and His Majesty would not, at present, be able to reconcile himself to placing on the unattached list, a servant as

[1] At the accession of Abdul Hamid, he was his favourite First Secretary, and was thereupon appointed Grand Vizier.

[2] He had been Grand Vizier in the time of Abdul Aziz, and ruined the Empire by his wretched and Russophil policy.

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capable and experienced as Your Highness. Consequently, the reasons of your resignation are not admissible. His Majesty orders me to beg that you will address yourself directly to the Palace, if you have complaints to formulate. —I am, etc.,

"(Signed) ALI FUAD.

"10*th October* 1295, *O.S.*"
(22*nd October*, 1879.)

Reply.

To Ali Fuad Bey, H.M. First Secretary.

"EXCELLENCY,—I have received the cipher telegram of the 10th October, 1295, and I humbly thank His Majesty for the questions which he has deigned to address to me; my request is occasioned by the weakness of my body and by the responsibility imposed upon me by the state of the vilayet. All the services of the vilayet are in disorder; the localities, as well as the population on the coast, are almost entirely under foreign influences, and the interior of the country, ever since the war, has been undermined by insurrections, which paralyse all the efforts of the State to bear on the abolition of the dissensions and revolts, in order to secure to the population a measure of repose and justice under the ægis of the State, by taking into consideration the exigencies of the localities and the requirements of the inhabitants. While this state of affairs exists, the enforced application in this vilayet of such reforms as those imposed in the vilayets of Konia and of Angora has only succeeded in alienating still further the population from the Government, and caused it to sympathise still more strongly with the foreigners. Moreover, even the power to assure the security of the Province is in the hands of the Military Administration, yet the responsibility thereof has been assumed by the Vali, which is not in the least in agreement with any known rule, and the disputes which may arise from this system can only add to the other mismanagements, and as the vilayet cannot go on for more than six months or a year in this manner, I find myself obliged to resign my functions. I am proud of sacrificing my life for His Majesty, in any service or in any country whatsoever. There exists only one means to effect the improvement of the state of the Province, and

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that is the appointment of a capable and honest Vali, to whom would be accorded full power to apply all the administrative and financial reforms, as well as the works of public utility according to the exigencies of the locality and of the populace, and according to what was done in the vilayet of Bagdad, the military force must be placed in the hands of the Vali in order to concentrate all the converging powers to this sole aim. I only venture to make these proposals on the strength of the invitation given me by the Imperial command.—I am, etc.,

"(Signed) MIDHAT.

"11*th October* 1295, *O.S.*"
(23*rd October* 1879.)

Telegram in reply, from H.M. First Secretary.

"YOUR HIGHNESS,—Your reply telegram, which has only just arrived, has been submitted to His Majesty, who was much gratified to hear that you declare yourself proud to be able to sacrifice your life in His Majesty's service. I have been ordered to communicate the imperial compliments to you, and to inform you that in two or three days someone from the Palace will start for Syria, charged to furnish you with the instructions and Irades relating to the contents of Your Highness' telegram.—I am, etc.,

"(Signed) ALI FUAD.

"12*th October* 1295, *O.S.*"
(24*th October* 1879.)

Thus it is seen that Abdul Hamid refused to accept the resignation of Midhat Pasha, but Midhat gave him the choice between his resignation and the desired reforms, and sent the Grand Vizier long schemes for the general re-organisation of the province.

To the Grand Vizier, Saïd Pasha.

"YOUR HIGHNESS,—Exhausted after a continuous service of the State of nearly forty years, and further weakened by my age which is nearly sixty, my sole desire, prior to my return from Europe, was to withdraw myself from all public affairs. The permission, which I obtained

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from His Majesty, to live in the island of Crete with my family, was the favour which I most desired. But His Majesty, recollecting my former services and deigning to believe that I should be able once more to devote myself to the work, was graciously pleased to appoint me to the Governorship of Syria. Although worn out both mentally and physically, I could but bow in gratitude before the imperial will, and trusting in Divine support I took up my duties.

"Thirty years ago I had already filled the office of Secretary in this vilayet, and twenty-seven years ago I had been there on a temporary mission. Thus I had a certain knowledge of the manners of the inhabitants. Judge therefore what was my surprise, on my return there, to discover a complete change in the Administrative and Political Government of this province. As France was protecting the Lebanese, England found herself obliged to protect the Druses; the Americans were founding schools etc., in the Djebel Noussairi, in order to create there a sphere of influence for themselves. Whilst the Germans, under the name of *Colonies*, were peopling Palestine with German emigrants, the Spaniards, who cherished analogous schemes, had constructed a school and a church at Jaffa, in order that they might have their share. All these influences produced the very worst effect on the country, for one party of the Christians cherish a dream of union with Lebanon, whilst another party are seeking foreign protection, and meanwhile the Mussulmans can only marvel at the disorder. Now, although it is incumbent upon the State to reassure public opinion and to put an end to all these exterior influences, yet, on account of the exigencies of the war, the only orders sent from the Central Authority consist of demands for money, and for men for the Army. This state of things has opened the door to every abuse under the sun, and both law and order have been completely neglected. The officials of every rank, with some few exceptions, only seek their own personal interests, and the result of this, on the manners of the inhabitants, is so disastrous, that murders and robbery are the order of the day, and there is no security to property. To go no further than Tripoli, in Syria, during the last four years I myself have seen no fewer than ninety cases of murder, theft and pillage in the districts of Akiar and Safna alone; and not one single case has ever been brought to judgment. The

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thieves and brigands remain unpunished or are released, whilst innocent people are detained, without being previously tried, and are subjected to penalties varying from eight to ten years. I have myself, this time, liberated several prisoners of this category, and I abstain from mentioning the administration of the districts dependent on the Kaimakam of Dehle.

"As to the financial state of the province, it is most deplorable, and, as I have already had the honour of showing you, in a previous letter, the public revenues are reduced to one half; the country has been ruined by the tithes, and the depredations of the Army have desolated that which remained. The disastrous effect of the paper money having been to reduce the revenues by one half, one is appalled at the acknowledged deficit. This enumeration is a faithful *résumé* of the state of the vilayet, a state of which foreigners are the first to complain, whilst at the same time, they are just those who have the greatest political profits to gain from the continuance of these disorders. It is quite certain, that if this condition of affairs is not brought to an end, the Great Powers will place the administration of the vilayet of Anatolia in the hands of foreign officials, under the pretext of the introduction of reforms. And, as the schemes of foreigners for Syria are well-known, to accept their conditions, based upon the maladministration denounced by the European newspapers, would only increase public opinion in their favour, and cause their pretentions to be sustained by the Cabinets of Europe.

"Ever since my arrival, I have done all in my power to bring some order into the affairs of the vilayet and to avoid the dangers I have detailed above. With your support, the question of the central district might be arranged, but the improvement of the province is not even then accomplished. There still remains the great difficulty of establishing the financial condition of the vilayet on an equitable base, of improving the Tribunals, and, above all, of putting an end to the extortions of the officials, who, in addition to the loss they occasion to the Treasury, do still more to discredit the Government in the eyes of both the natives and of the foreigners. In a word, it would be necessary, at all costs, to reassure public opinion by the application of existing laws.

"The actual state of things having reached this point, the laws, which are at present being deliberated upon in

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the Council of Ministers, should be elaborated and applied in all the provinces of the Empire, taking into consideration the manners and customs of each province.

"It would be a complete mistake to believe that this state of things can continue, and it is quite insupportable to me to know the remedy for the evil and yet not to be able to apply it, and above all to acquiesce wittingly in the harm caused by the present administration.

"I feel myself obliged once more to submit the above observations to Your Highness.—I am, etc.,

"MIDHAT.

"*17th March* 1295, *O.S.*"
(*29th March* 1879.)

Abdul Hamid, however, although he promised Midhat to apply these measures of amelioration, which he considered indispensable, refrained from giving his sanction to them, and the troubles which broke out, in the middle of all this, between the Druses and the Arabs of Hauran, obliged Midhat to keep his office in order to prevent the conflict from taking a turn which might have led to foreign intervention. The causes of these troubles and the attitude of the Palace and of the Government are shown in the following correspondence with Midhat Pasha.

Telegram sent to the Grand Vizier, by Midhat Pasha.

"YOUR HIGHNESS,—It is necessary to give Your Highness details of the affair of Hauran, for which you ask in your telegram of the 3rd October. The Djébéli Druse (Druse Mountain) and the valley of Ledja are inhabited entirely by the Druses. Since the events in Egypt these people have completely lost all respect for the Government, to which they no longer furnish any troops, or taxes, but all the crimes and misdeeds committed in the neighbourhood arise from their insubordination and opposition to authority. Last year they captured the English post, and those people who attacked the caravan at Iki-kapoulu this year, and killed two men, are also Druses. Some of the stolen cattle have been found at Djébéli Druse, but it has been impossible to punish the authors of the crime.

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This district being exempt from all taxation, it has become the haunt of brigands, and of all those who wish to live as such; those who have committed a crime, deserters, or good-for-nothing Druses from Lebanon, all have sought refuge here for the last five or six years, until the mountain is crowded with them. It is they who attacked Hauran, put the inhabitants to flight, and up to the present moment they have conquered seventeen villages. They provoke quarrels and massacres for the most trivial causes, in order that they may be able to lay hands on other villages in succession. The Arabs of Hauran, having now adopted the Druse tactics, had entered into alliance, at the beginning of the present occurrence, with the inhabitants of Adjloun, of Kounitara, as well as with other Arab tribes, and were prepared to march against the Druses. The officials who were sent to the place were able to prevail upon the Hauranians, by their counsels, to abandon their plans and to obey the orders of the Government, but they insisted on those Druses who had been guilty of acts of brigandage being brought to justice and punished. The Druses, meanwhile, will listen to no representations, and remain with a force of several thousand armed men, in the face of the Hauranians. Although we learn that the Commandant of the troops which were sent, has been in communication with the Druses, in order to bring them back under control, we are not sufficiently well acquainted with the result, and for further details you should apply to the Marshal Ahmed Eyoub Pasha.—I am, etc.,

"MIDHAT.

"*6th October* 1295, *O.S.*"
(*18th October* 1879).

Cipher Telegram from the Grand Vizier to Midhat Pasha.

"YOUR HIGHNESS,—The English Ambassador has just been to see us, on account of the events which are taking place among the Druses, which he deeply regrets, and he has made the same communications to the Minister for Foreign Affairs. It is of course a well-known fact that England offers a moral protection to the Druses, whilst France does the same to the Maronites. Whilst the English, on one hand, are scarcely pleased with the measures which have been adopted against the Druses, yet on the other side there are the representations made

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to Your Highness by the British Consul, to the effect that France would have to bring a formal complaint if the increasing looting by the Druses continues, as it is very hard on the Maronites. In short, although the Druses are behaving abominably, it is not in keeping with the justice of the State to leave them unpunished, and yet, although their system of brigandage dates from time immemorial, an opportune moment in which to teach them a lesson has never been found. Supposing that the troops sent to safeguard the security of the Empire were sufficient to end the whole affair, it is certain that the continuation of the conflict between the Druses and Hauranians could have no good result to the Empire. Consequently the best means, in our opinion, by which to put an end to this affair, consist in postponing the subjection of the Druses until the period of the complete re-organisation of the vilayet, and we must resign ourselves to acting solely as arbitrators between the Druses and Hauranians, to bring about an amicable arrangement. Your Highness tells us that the Hauranians would refuse to accept the indemnity that the Druses offer them. This may at first sight seem a difficulty in the way of mediation by the Government, yet it is necessary to induce the Hauranians to accept this indemnity, in order to prevent the shedding of blood, and to avoid the multiplication of vexatious incidents which might bring on political complications.

"If by chance the above arrangement cannot be brought about, Your Highness is then authorised to suggest to the Hauranians the total payment of the indemnity demanded by the State, informing the public that it is among the pacific intentions of the Government to have recourse to this solution of the matter, in the sole aim of abolishing the enmity which exists between its two subject races.

"Necessary instructions as to the departure of the required troops have been given to the War Office. I think it is my duty to add, that in case the affair cannot be amicably arranged, it would be well to have recourse to the influence of the leading men on either side, this being a method, the efficacy of which has been already proved, and if it were necessary Your Highness might go in person to the scene of conflict.

"In short, we beg that Your Highness will employ every means for conciliation, and we anxiously await the

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news of the closure of this incident, without having to seek the intervention of coercion.—I am, etc.,

"SAID,
"*Grand Vizier.*"

"13*th October* 1295, *O.S.*"
(25*th October* 1879).

Reply from Midhat Pasha to the Telegram from the Grand Vizier.

"YOUR HIGHNESS,—In reply to your telegram of 13th October, it has been shown in my previous communications that the incident of Hauran was caused by a quarrel between the inhabitants of two villages, on account of a girl, and this quarrel spread until it attained its present serious proportions. Since it is quite impossible to remain a passive spectator in face of a force of between three and four thousand individuals, all armed and ready to kill each other, we first of all sent officials, then gendarmes, and finally regular troops, in order to prevent a collision between the two parties, and we ended by calling in the Sheiks—proposing that they should come to some amicable arrangement. The Hauranians thereupon insisted that those Druses who were guilty of having killed some of their tribe unjustly should be brought up to justice, or else, since they are the more numerous, that the State should permit them to march against the Druses. On the other hand the Druses declare that it is contrary to their customs to be given up to justice, and fearing lest they may thereby create a precedent, they refuse to surrender the culprits; at the same time they have taken up their position in front of the troops, and cut off the water-supply that was used by the Army. They are thus prepared to offer a strong resistance, and at the same time are pillaging the villages which are inhabited by both Mussulmans and Christians. Yesterday they devastated four villages, killed two of the inhabitants, and after having wounded several others, they slew four more whom they met on the road. We have sent many special envoys to them, trying to impress upon them the necessity of surrendering at any rate some of the twenty-five criminals to the Government, and they have at last consented to pay an indemnity, which was intended to go to the families of those men who had been assassinated. The Hauranians, however, will not hear of any such solution.

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One thing is certain: it is quite impossible for us, after what has already occurred, to leave the Hauranians at the mercy of the Druses, without running the risk of creating very grave political and administrative dangers. Consequently, if Your Highness can succeed in finding any other method than that of the employment of an armed force, we shall do all in our power to execute it successfully.—I am, etc.,

"MIDHAT.

"*14th October* 1295, *O.S.*"
(*26th October* 1878.)

Telegram from the Grand Vizier to Midhat Pasha.

"YOUR HIGHNESS,—Since your advice coincides with ours that the Druse question should be amicably settled, it is necessary to take immediate steps towards obtaining a good result and preventing any recurrence of these incidents, and this without having recourse to military assistance. It would be very helpful to have the co-operation of those who by their influence would be able to quiet down the minds of the people. Your Highness' presence in these districts would create a good impression. We therefore beg that Your Highness will let us hear of your departure and of the means you intend to adopt. From the telegram from the Marshal to the Minister of War, it appears that the Druses have fired on the gendarmes whom General Djémil Pasha had sent to that district in order to try and re-establish peace, and that on a Captain being killed, the gendarmes retaliated, and that a battle took place. As this is not at all expedient, Your Highness is particularly requested to put an end to all reprisals.

"The Minister for War has stated that two battalions of regular troops, and three battalions of reserve (with munitions of war) are just starting for Beyrout, on the steamer *Mevridi-Nousret*.—I am, etc.,

"SAÏD,
"*Grand Vizier.*"

"*16th October* 1295, *O.S.*"
(*28th October* 1879.)

Reply to the Grand Vizier from Midhat Pasha.

YOUR HIGHNESS,—The troops were not sent to

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Hauran with the intention of fighting with the Druses, but, as my last telegram explained, more than four thousand men, from one part and another, had armed themselves and were prepared to attack, and as, under these circumstances, the Government was obliged to interfere, it was simply to prevent bloodshed and to procure justice for those who had been injured. Your Highness is not unaware that those officials, who were punished in 1276 (1860), owed their disgrace to having failed to execute their duty conscientiously.

"Although the re-establishment of order at Djébéli-Druse might be obtained as the natural result of our action, yet for the moment, this would be of only a secondary interest; and since Your Highness recommends us not to force it to this point, it may be possibly obtained in the future.

"It is as Your Highness remarks: the Druses having always lived in a state of brigandage, have been treated differently from others, and, until now, I have tried to manage them with due recognition of this fact. Some of the Druse Chieftains who were at Damascus have been sent to the disturbed districts on a mission of peace. But they only joined the others, and have committed criminal acts. Without taking into consideration the treachery of these men, our one aim has been always to find some means of ending this conflict without calling in the aid of the Military, and we were awaiting the reception of the Druse Chieftains from Mount Lebanon, who, through the negotiations of Rustem Pasha, had offered themselves as mediators between the belligerents. But yesterday, at a distance of only three-quarters of an hour from the camp of the Imperial Army, the inhabitants of Hauran began once more to fight with those of Ledja. As soon as this news reached the camp, a company of gendarmes and two companies of regular troops were sent to the spot to try and separate them. But the Druses immediately fired upon the Imperial troops, killing two gendarmes and wounding an officer. On that, General Djémil Pasha joining them, with two companies of regular troops, the Druses killed a captain and fifteen soldiers, and the battle lasted until midnight. From a telegram that the Marshal Ahmed Eyoub Pasha received this morning, it appears that Djémil Pasha has returned to the camp, with all his troops.

"After this incident the Marshal Ahmed Eyoub Pasha

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gave the necessary orders to concentrate the remaining military troops. Holo Pasha will be sent, with a member of the Administrative Council of the vilayet, to try and persuade the belligerents to lay down their arms. But to bring this business to an end, with moderation, one will be obliged to drive the Druses from their positions in Hauran. The arrival of the promised troops is quite indispensable.—I am, etc.,

"MIDHAT.

"*17th October* 1295, *O.S.*"
(*29th October* 1879.)

The Grand Vizier to Midhat Pasha.

"YOUR HIGHNESS,—The report of the Minister for War, and the telegrams which have been exchanged relating to the question of the Hauran Druses, have been read at the Council of Ministers. After some deliberation it has been decided to settle this question in a pacific manner, and to invite Your Highness to go in person to the affected districts, to hasten the departure of the troops which have been demanded, and that the Minister for War should give Marshal Ahmed Eyoub Pasha the necessary orders, so that he may be in agreement with the ideas of Your Highness. The importance of the Question and the wishes of the Sublime Porte being settled by the correspondence which has passed up to the present, Your Highness is requested to go to the camp and to bring this matter to a peaceful close.—I am, etc.,

"SAÏD,
"*Grand Vizier.*"

"*22nd October* 1295, *O.S.*"
(*4th November* 1879.)

Reply from Midhat Pasha to the Telegram from the Grand Vizier.

"YOUR HIGHNESS,—Since the Druse Question must, in conformity with His Majesty's orders, be brought to a pacific termination, may I beg that you will leave to me the choice of means to be employed, and wait patiently for a few days longer. You may have every reliance that the matter will be ended without having recourse to arms, and in a manner worthy of the prestige of the State and of the Army.—I am, etc.,

"MIDHAT.

"*23rd October* 1295, *O.S.*"
(*5th November* 1879.)

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From Midhat Pasha to H.M. First Secretary.

"YOUR EXCELLENCY,—The Druse Question has at last come to an end, with the arrival of the Sheiks yesterday at Damascus. They are anxious to solicit the protection of our august master. The Government having insisted on the extradition of those individuals who were implicated in the assassinations of Basr-el-Houreiri, the four men who survived the skirmishes have been accordingly delivered up to the authorities, and they are now in prison, waiting to be brought before the tribunals. This fact is full of promise for the future, for, hitherto, the Druses have never been accustomed to deliver to the authorities those criminals who have sought refuge in their midst. I must now devote myself to the consideration of the future condition of the Druses, which is of great importance.

"As there is now no further need for the battalions of Reserve, recently sent, they have been sent back, and we have decided, with the Marshal Ahmed Eyoub Pasha, that the battalions now at Hauran and at Damascus shall be returned.—I am, etc., MIDHAT.

"*29th October* 1295, *O.S.*"
(*11th November* 1879.)

Midhat Pasha, who had withdrawn his resignation, with the express purpose of not leaving the province in a state of turmoil, and in order to bring the Druse Question to a suitable and lawful termination, succeeded thus in re-establishing peace, in a manner that was honourable to the Government, in spite of the unjustifiable conduct of the Sublime Porte and of the Palace. But Midhat, perceiving the impossibility of working satisfactorily with the Government, once more sent in his resignation, in the following telegrams:—

Telegram sent to the First Secretary, enclosing the Resignation of Midhat Pasha.

"With respect to my proffered resignation of October last, His Majesty condescended to issue an Irade, which made me decide to wait patiently for some time longer. Now that the question of the Druses, which was the

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reason of the refusal of my request, has been settled, and the conditions of the vilayet are absolutely normal, I humbly beg that my resignation may be accepted by His Majesty, on account of the reasons which render my position untenable.—I am, etc.,

"MIDHAT.

"*18th May* 1296, *O.S.*"
(*30th May* 1880.)

H.M. First Secretary to Midhat Pasha.

"YOUR HIGHNESS,—Your telegram, dated 18th May 1296, has been presented to His Majesty. If there has been any delay as to the departure of the personage who was charged to communicate the Imperial instructions to Your Highness, and to receive your exact replies, it has been occasioned entirely by the difficulty he has experienced in quitting his post. And it is very difficult to find any one who possesses the same qualities, to replace him. You must not attribute the non-execution of the Imperial promise to any other cause. In your telegram you say that your resignation arises from causes which are not unknown to His Majesty. In one of your later telegrams these causes resolve themselves into two principal ones: of which the first consists in Your Highness's advanced age, and the other in the difficulties you encounter in the Administration of the Province. The first reason cannot be accounted as valid, by a servant who is devoted to his country and Sovereign, and whose chief desire should be never to renounce the honour of serving the State. As to the extension of power, a special order will soon be published on the duties of Governor-Generals, so that this second reason of your resignation will no longer have any force. His Majesty expresses a desire to know positively if Your Highness wishes to resign from any other cause, independent of those already cited.

"ALI FUAD.

"19*th May* 1296, *O.S.*"
(31*st May* 1880.)

Telegram from Midhat Pasha in reply to H.M. First Secretary, Ali Fuad Bey.

"YOUR EXCELLENCY,—Besides those causes cited in your telegram replying to my request for permission to

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retire, I may also mention the difficulties presented by the application of the new laws, and the insults to which I am exposed on all sides, on account of which I find myself obliged once more to entreat His Majesty for his indulgence. As I said six months ago in one of my letters, I am firmly resolved to sacrifice my life in the service of His Majesty, and as my life is nearing its end, the few years that remain are of but little importance. But there is something that is dearer and still more sacred than life —that is honour.

"It is quite possible that there may be some reason of which I am not aware, for the formalities which have occurred, and for the present situation, but, from my humble point of view, and from my most inward conviction, everything seems to combine to wound my honour, as much in what concerns the administration of the vilayet which has been confided to my care, as in my private capacity. Now, as it is pardonable that I should desire not to tarnish my honour, which I have preserved unspotted during a service of more than forty-five years, I have decided to protest no longer, but to retire. I, therefore, take the liberty of once more referring this subject to our magnanimous sovereign.—I am, etc.,

"MIDHAT.

"*21st May* 1296, *O.S.*"
(*3rd June* 1880.)

To Midhat Pasha, from the First Secretary, Ali Fuad Bey.

[*Confidential.*]

"YOUR HIGHNESS' telegram of 21st May, 1296, has been submitted to His Majesty. All the world knows how highly His Majesty has always regarded your honour, and Your Highness, from the Humanitarian point of view, can only recognize and approve the justice of this observation. For many years Your Highness has rendered the greatest services to the State, you occupy the highest rank in the Vizierat, and are one of the greatest dignitaries and Statesmen of the Empire, and His Majesty informs you that he will guarantee your honour and consideration, as well as your reputation.

"If the difficulties, which you declare you have encountered in the application of the new laws, refer to the

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judicial laws, that must arise from the incapacity of the officials in the Judicial Department. Without criticising the fundamental significance of the laws, Sir Henry Layard has also represented to His Majesty, in a report, the difficulty that would be encountered in applying these laws, for want of competent officials, and, although every one recognises the necessity of the adoption and promulgation of these laws and regulations, yet the rumour of Your Highness' resignation has immediately given rise to criticisms, which were delivered here yesterday evening by several personages. As you know, one of the very first reforms, the execution of which is to be desired, and even the principal reform to be executed, is the re-organisation of the Courts of Justice. But the difficulties involved in carrying out these reforms place the Government in a very awkward position. Your Highness is begged to draw up a note stating the changes that are necessary, in the opinion of Your Highness, who has so great an experience both in Civil Administration and also in judicial laws, and to place this note in the hands of a capable official—one who possesses your full confidence—that it may be presented to His Majesty. You will also make use of this capable official, possessing your confidence, in your correspondence with the Palace. As our principal aim must be always to serve the State and our Sovereign with all fidelity and devotion, Your Highness is requested not to pay any attention to tale-bearing, which is unworthy of any consideration, and not to allow yourself to be affected by it. His Majesty appreciates your actions, and sends you his friendliest Imperial greetings.

"I am, etc.,

"ALI FUAD.

"*23rd May* 1296, *O.S.*"
(*5th June* 1880.)

Midhat Pasha to Ali Fuad Bey.

"The most precious and the most welcome part of your telegram of 23rd May being the expression of the Imperial goodwill towards me, I must first of all offer you my humble thanks. As to the other matters, your Excellency is not unaware that not only do I recognise in principle the necessity and the benefit of the new laws, but I am, above all, one of the chief advocates of judicial

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reform. As was mentioned in the Imperial telegram conferring the Governorship of Syria upon me, the local manners and customs must be taken into consideration with regard to the new organisations. But the new laws, instead of embodying these recommendations, have been drawn up on exactly the old lines, and when I suggest that with a slight modification these laws might be ameliorated, my observations are systematically ignored. This state of things has produced a result quite the opposite of that intended, and the greater part of the new laws, as well as the older ones, remain in disuse. The general situation is therefore most strange and peculiar.

"To this disorder must be added the difference which exists between the civil and military authorities, which have ended by becoming hostile to each other. A country such as Syria, which is full of troubles and intrigues, both internal and external, is in crying need of a military force, yet every time that we demand an armed force we meet with a deliberate refusal, or the troops which have been sent are withdrawn without reason, or else our official letters remain unanswered. Now, although it is possible that this results from the inimical system which has been adopted against me personally, yet, undoubtedly, the Government and the country are the principal sufferers from it; and when it comes to six months passing without the governor and the marshal of a vilayet meeting, one can imagine the state of affairs in the province. Again, the grant for the gendarmes and the salaries of the officials having been reduced, these measures have struck a blow at the security of the country, and have driven the officials to corruption, whilst the judicial system which has been adopted by the tribunals towards criminals has weakened public confidence. This state of things being well known, the orders which arrive daily never fail to put all the responsibility on the Governor. Now, it is impossible to accept this situation, nor can I, in a telegram, give an explanation of all these difficulties, but, in conformity with the Imperial Irade, a confidential official is on the point of starting, commissioned to give you the amplest information. I shall strive for patience until his return.—I am, etc.,

"MIDHAT.

"25*th May* 1296, *O.S.*"
(*7th June* 1880).

Quite apart from all this question, the Sultan Abdul

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Hamid was far from being satisfied with Midhat Pasha's sojourn in Syria. The Syrians, realising the good that he had done to the country, were loud in their expressions of gratitude, which gave offence to the Sultan. The cries of "Long live Midhat Pasha!" in the streets, and the interviews of the British Ambassador, Sir Henry Layard, with the Governor-General during his travels in Syria, all augmented the fears of the Palace. Midhat's enemies then put into circulation the rumour that Syria would soon become an autonomous principality, and that Midhat Pasha would receive the title of Khedive.

Abdul Hamid then informed Midhat that he declined to accept his resignation, that he wished to see him continue his services to the State, and that he appointed him Governor-General of the vilayet of Smyrna. The Syrians addressed a petition to the Palace, begging that Midhat might remain at Damascus, but the Sultan paid absolutely no attention to this act on the part of the Syrian population, and Midhat found himself compelled to start off for his new post on board the Imperial yacht *Izzeddine*, which had been sent for that purpose.

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CHAPTER X

MIDHAT, GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF SMYRNA

THE vilayet and town of Smyrna were then, like other provinces of the Empire, in a state of lamentable disorder. It is quite certain that the Sultan, who had refused to apply the necessary reforms in Syria, had never sent Midhat to Smyrna with the intention of putting a stop to the administrative anarchy existing in that part of his dominions. Midhat, although well aware that the aim of all these machinations was only to paralyse his activity, could not forget the duties and responsibilities which the Governor-Generalship placed on his shoulders.

There were a quantity of liberated convicts of every foreign nationality in Smyrna, who daily committed all manner of theft and crime; the sense of terror in the province was so great that no one dared venture abroad in the streets after night-fall. Midhat Pasha formed a corps of police, in imitation of the European police, a force which at that time did not exist in Turkey apart from the *gendarmerie*. He showed the same activity here as in the other vilayets, and succeeded, after several arrests, in establishing public security. He widened the streets of the city, and founded a School of Arts and Crafts, as well as an orphanage, which still exists under the name of "Islahané."

On the other hand, the Sultan never renounced his aim of ridding himself of Midhat, and four or five months after his arrival in Smyrna, Abdul Hamid decided to

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strike a mortal blow at him, in once more raising the question of the sudden death of his uncle, the ex-Sultan Abdul Aziz, whose suicide in the Palace we have already related (see p. 89). This suicide had not only been verified by eye-witnesses, but also by the report of all the doctors of the foreign embassies at Constantinople, and above all by the statement of Dr Dickson, doctor at the British Embassy, a fact which has been confirmed by Sir Henry Elliot, who was the then English Ambassador, and who wrote an account of the deposition and suicide of Abdul Aziz, which appeared in the February number of the *Nineteenth Century* in 1888. Now, after a lapse of four years, the Sultan asserted that his uncle had not committed suicide, but that he had been assassinated, and that the murder had been perpetrated by Hussein Avni Pasha, the Minister for War (who was himself murdered in Midhat's house, in 1876, by Cherkess Hassan), and by his two brothers-in-law, Mahmoud Djelaleddin and Nouri Pashas, and that *other personages of high rank* (an allusion to Midhat, Mehemet Rushdi Pashas, and to the Sheik-ul-Islam—Hairoullah Effendi) were implicated in the affair. In fact the two brothers-in-law, Mahmoud Djelaleddin and Nouri Pashas, were arrested in Constantinople, and the news of a fresh trial of the assassins of Abdul Aziz was noised abroad by the European Press.[1]

[1] "*Turkey. Constantinople, 11th May.*—The doubts I expressed in a recent despatch, concerning the veracity of the chief witnesses in the enquiry about the death of Abdul Aziz, are being confirmed, and the Sultan now hesitates about bringing the affair before a public tribunal. Several important personages, who cannot be suspected of complicity, declare openly that the raising of the question was the result of an intrigue, and at the Palace the opinion is gaining ground that the matter will terminate with the degradation and exile of the Sultan's two brothers-in-law, and the temporary imprisonment of their supposed accomplices, without any formal trial. When the enquiry was first instituted, an old and devoted

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The Turkish Press, inspired from the Palace, addressed praises to the Sultan, and some newspapers—amongst others the *Terdjumani Hakikat*—actually went so far as to advise Abdul Hamid to arrest every one who had played any part in the affair of Abdul Aziz.

By this time the Sublime Porte had lost all authority, and the enemies of the Constitutional Party had increased very considerably. Mehemet Rushdi Pasha, the former Grand Vizier, and colleague of Midhat, had been condemned to pass his remaining years on his estates near Manissa; the Sheik-ul-Islam, Hairoullah Effendi, a follower of Midhat, had been exiled to Mecca. The few Liberals who remained in the capital had all been sent away into the provinces, either as officials or as exiles. Only the partisans of Abdul Hamid and those who had changed their opinions and who now ranged themselves on the side of despotism—such as Ahmed Midhat Effendi—were to be found in Constantinople. Ahmed Midhat Effendi, who had been one of Midhat Pasha's most ardent followers, now heaped all the lowest slanders upon him, through the pages of the *Terdjumani Hakikat*, asserting that Abdul Aziz had been murdered, and that the culprits must be arrested.

Midhat Pasha was in receipt of the most alarming news from his friends at Constantinople, and also from abroad; he was told that his life was in great danger. His only reply was: "I have no reason to be alarmed nor to fly from Turkey. I have laboured for the good of my country, and I have nothing with which to reproach myself; if others see reason to blame me, I am always ready to reply before a tribunal." He took no further steps than to write a letter to the Grand Vizier, protesting

friend of the dynasty reminded the Sultan of an unsavoury Turkish saying, equivalent to our proverb about the wisdom of letting sleeping dogs lie, and His Majesty has now reason to regret that he did not follow his advice."—*Times*, 12th May (p. 5, col. 3).

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against the baseness of Ahmed Midhat Effendi, Editor of the *Terdjumani Hakikat*. The letter is as follows :—

From Midhat Pasha to the Grand Vizier.

"YOUR HIGHNESS,—The number of the *Terdjumani Hakikat*, dated 5th December, 1296, after stating that the Editor of a newspaper, published at Athens, and directed against the Imperial Government, is Essad Effendi, who was exiled to Damascus, but who has since sought refuge in Greece, goes on to insinuate that in producing this paper he has my moral and pecuniary support. The same week, explanations are given in the *Messenger*, both in French and English, of these calumnies, and this is done in the most peculiar manner, my name being mentioned. The baseness of the Editor of the *Terdjumani Hakikat* is well known to the whole world. As to Essad Effendi, all who have seen him at Damascus will be able to estimate these erroneous publications at their true value. I think there is no more for me to add on this subject, for if I said anything, it would be according to the rules to bring an action. But these publications are not only hostile to me personally. It is beyond all question that the publication, in a foreign land, of a newspaper, directed against the Imperial Government, with the material and moral aid that I am reported to have furnished, constitutes a crime; consequently, how can you leave such a man at the head of so important and vast a vilayet as that of Smyrna? Such a state of things does much to destroy the prestige of the State, and all the more so, because of the confirmation of these slanders by the newspapers of Constantinople, which are under the orders and surveillance of the Sublime Porte. It seems to me wiser to send in my resignation, than to give rise to such a state of affairs, so that the honour and consideration of the State may be preserved intact. This course is, moreover, in keeping with the decision, reached by me some time ago. Nevertheless, I feel it my duty that I should first of all seek Your Highness' advice on the subject.—I am, etc.,

"MIDHAT.

"*25th December* 1296, *O.S.*"
(*7th January* 1881.)

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However, the Sultan, who wished to put an end to Midhat, decided finally to arrest both him and Mehemet Rushdi Pasha, who was then at Manissa. The arrival in Smyrna of the aides-de-camp, General Hilmi Pasha and Colonel Riza Bey (at present Minister of War), with their suites, gave the first warning to the Governor-General, who ordered his men to watch the acts and movements of these aides-de-camp, and very soon reached the conviction that these emissaries had come with an order to arrest him.

Among the men who had been charged by Midhat to get the aides-de-camp to talk about the manner in which the arrest was to be made, was a police agent, an extremely intelligent man, who, disguised as a rich merchant, was lodging in the same hotel as Hilmi Pasha, chief of the mission. Hilmi Pasha, at the end of a good dinner, had allowed to the pretended merchant that he had come to Smyrna by the Imperial command, and that his object was to arrest the Governor-General, but that he was waiting for further instructions before carrying out his instructions. Midhat, in order to be prepared for any occurrence, had ordered a secret door to be made, and one of the steamers of the Compagnie Jely was retained in the harbour, ready to carry him off abroad. One evening the above-mentioned agent came and warned him that Hilmi Pasha had been called to the Telegraph Office, and that, after a long conversation with the Palace, he had re-entered the hotel, had put on his uniform, and gone straight to the barracks. It was asserted that among the orders he had received, he had been instructed to kill Midhat and to massacre his family. Indeed, one of Midhat's servants, named Nezir, had been bribed, and it was arranged that before the Governor's house was occupied, he should fire off a revolver on the troops, and thus give the signal for the

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massacre. In support of this theory, it is interesting to note that after Midhat Pasha's exile the said Nezir entered into the service of the Yildiz Kiosk, and received a considerable salary. Besides this, one of the chamberlains of the Sultan Abdul Hamid, Bessim Bey, who died some time ago in disgrace, whilst still in the service of the Palace, assured a member of Midhat's family that Hilmi Pasha was not only entrusted with the arrest of Midhat, but that the Sultan had given him a positive order to have him killed in the tumult which was to be adroitly brought about, and to massacre his whole family, men, women and children. It was on this account that General Hilmi had bribed Nezir, so that the public might believe that Midhat had refused to obey, and that he had fired upon the soldiers.

On the receipt of this news from his agent, Midhat Pasha, without losing his *sangfroid*, sought out his family and acquainted them with the position of affairs. He advised them to be resigned, and informed them of his intention of quitting Turkish soil from the moment that his life had been threatened. As midnight struck, three cannon-shots rang out from the barracks (in Turkey this is the method employed for giving the alarm of fire), but Midhat understood only too well that it was done with the express purpose of distracting the attention of the mob. At the same moment he left his house by the secret door, accompanied by his secretary, and stole down to the quay; but perceiving that the quays were blocked by sentinels, he hailed a carriage, and recollecting that the English Consul, Mr Dennis, was not in the town, he told them to drive to the French Consulate, and there begged for protection. Meanwhile, the soldiers, who had forced their way at the point of their bayonets up to the doors of the first floor, now demanded to speak with Midhat Pasha, and were informed that he had just left. This reply being

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absolutely unexpected, they were convinced that he was hiding in one of the rooms. Hilmi Pasha gave orders that the house should be searched, and that all the servants should be thrown into prison. The troops entered, breaking down the doors, and recommending the ladies not to move, they made an exhaustive search, even tearing up the flooring. At this moment, by way of fulfilling his cowardly promise and giving reason for a massacre, Nezir, hiding himself behind a mattress, tried to fire off his revolver, but one of the servants, realising the peril, tore the weapon from his hand.

After a minute search that lasted for several hours, and during which no trace of either Midhat nor yet of his papers had been discovered, Madame Midhat, seeing that the officers and soldiers had no intention of withdrawing, sent for General Hilmi and informed him that in the case of the troops remaining in the house, she would open the windows and call in the help of the people. This terrified the General, for he had received orders not to give rise to a revolution, and he dismissed the soldiers, only remaining himself with one or two officers. A few hours later the police informed General Hilmi that Midhat was at the French Consulate, and he thereupon went thither, and had it surrounded on every side. The French Consul-General, Monsieur Pélissier, had sent a telegram to the French Ambassador at Constantinople, informing him of all that had taken place. On seeking refuge at the French Consulate, Midhat had invited the consuls of all the Great Powers to attend; had acquainted them with the danger from which he had escaped, and had begged them to insist on a guarantee that he should be judged by a High Court. Meanwhile, he received a telegram from Constantinople begging him to surrender, and assuring him that no injustice should be done him, but that if e refused to do so, then he would be considered guilty.

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There are two versions given of this memorable occurrence of the spring of 1881; and these two versions are so much the more important, because they affect the truth of the fact whether the Government of the French Republic delivered up Midhat Pasha, who had sought refuge in the French Consulate, to the Sultan, or whether he surrendered of his own accord on receiving the telegram from Constantinople. The fact that he had caused a secret door to be constructed in a hidden corner of his house, and that a steamer had been kept in readiness in the harbour, all proves that Midhat had intended flight. Not having succeeded in his design of reaching the sea, he had sought refuge at the French Consulate, and he had implored the assistance that France might easily have rendered him. It is to be presumed that the ambassador, after having asked for instructions from Paris, and having explained to the Government the Sultan's insistence, may have informed Midhat that he could not effectually protect him. Not having any definite proof on this subject, it is impossible for us to certify anything. The opinions of the European Press were very divergent. We reprint the telegrams sent by the correspondent of the *Times* from Constantinople, dated 19th May and 21st May, 1881, which give the fullest details.[1]

[1] "Midhat Pasha, on taking refuge at the French Consulate, sent letters to all the other Consuls, requesting the protection of the Powers. The Consuls accordingly held a meeting, and decided to ask instructions from their respective Governments. The reason alleged by Midhat is that he is a victim of personal animosity, and that he is in danger of personal violence, but this ground of defence has been anticipated by the Imperial decision that the whole affair shall be submitted to the regular tribunal, the sittings of which will be public. His Majesty is evidently anxious that the whole matter should be thoroughly sifted, and for this purpose has appointed a sub-commission to interrogate the native and foreign doctors who held the post-mortem examination on the body of the late Sultan, as it has been rumoured that the medical report made at the time, is not

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Midhat Pasha had been perfectly well aware of what would happen. He knew the plots that had been formed against him, and when his friends had invited him to leave Turkey, by the boat which had been got ready to take

quite in accordance with the testimony of certain witnesses recently examined. This procedure seems to remove effectually the danger of personal violence, which Midhat alleges as the reason for having put himself under foreign protection."—*Times*, 19th May (p. 5, col. 4).

By Indo-European Telegraph.

"*Constantinople, 18th May.*—On receiving instructions from his Ambassador, the French Consul at Smyrna requested Midhat Pasha to quit the Consulate, whereupon the latter proceeded to surrender himself to the Turkish Military Governor. A judicial enquiry will be commenced at Smyrna."

"*Turkey. Constantinople, 21st May.*—Letters from Smyrna give some details concerning the arrest of Midhat Pasha. Between one and two o'clock on Tuesday morning he was awoke by a bugle call. He discovered that troops were advancing under the command of Hilmi Pasha, accompanied by one of the Sultan's aides-de-camp, who had recently arrived from Constantinople. He at once suspected the motive of the nocturnal visit, and as a small body of soldiers were entering the courtyard, he made his escape by a door in the wall of the harem garden, and reached safely the French Consulate. At an early hour the Consul assembled his colleagues, and Midhat Pasha declared to them that he placed himself under the protection of the Powers. Then followed the interchange of despatches with Constantinople and Paris, which I have described in a previous telegram. Midhat Pasha declared that he had no wish to leave the country, and was ready to proceed to Constantinople if he could obtain the necessary guarantees that he would be fairly tried, but Hilmi Pasha thought it prudent to take precautionary measures against a second flight by preventing small boats from approaching that part of the quay. Meanwhile, the French Consul had received stringent orders to withdraw the temporary protection which he had afforded, and accordingly, after having again called his colleagues together, he formally surrendered the fugitive to the Military. Next morning the Minister of Justice arrived in a special steamer to make a judicial enquiry. Midhat Pasha is being carefully guarded in a room in the barracks."—*Times*, 23rd May 1881 (p. 7, col. 2).

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him aboard, he replied, "I shall never give way before the insinuations of the Sultan. I shall never allow the world to say that I fled because I was guilty and that I feared the Sultan. I shall resist until the last moment, and if I then see that my life is in danger, I may perhaps have recourse to the means you offer." It was this same state of mind which led him to think of embarking, when the soldiers, under the command of General Hilmi Pasha, surrounded his house, and by their attitude showed plainly the danger in which both he and his family were placed. On realising the impossibility of carrying out this plan, he had taken refuge at the French Consulate, and had asked the Consuls of all the Powers that their respective Governments should demand a public trial, and had declared "that he gave himself up to judgment, trusting to the good faith of the telegram which he had received from Constantinople."

For the honour of France, we are inclined to believe that Midhat surrendered to the Ottoman authorities of his own accord. It is scarcely credible that France would have delivered Midhat Pasha to the Sultan, the more so because Gambetta, who was then in power, had been a great friend of his.

The Sultan had been anxious to have Midhat arrested when he was still Governor-General of Syria, but so great was his popularity in that Province, that Abdul Hamid was reluctantly obliged to relinquish his design, for fear of provoking a revolution.

The day following the arrest found the town of Smyrna still strictly guarded by the troops, and no one was permitted to go about the streets for fear of any demonstration. The terrified inhabitants closed their shops, and all business was suspended for twenty-four hours. Midhat was retained as a prisoner in the barracks, until the arrival of the Imperial yacht, which brought over the

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new Governor-General, the high judicial dignitaries, and also the Minister Djevdet Pasha. He embarked quietly in the midst of the general emotion, and duly arrived at Constantinople. Whilst waiting for the assembling of the High Court, the little pavilion in the "Yildiz Park," called "Malta Kiosk," was assigned to him as his place of residence by the Sultan.

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CHAPTER XI

THE TRIAL OF MIDHAT PASHA

As we have already stated, Midhat Pasha arrived at Constantinople in one of the Imperial yachts, accompanied by the Minister and the high judicial dignitaries. He was kept in the pavilion of the "Malta Kiosk," which is situated within the park of Yildiz. In accordance with his desire that he might be given a public trial, and that the conditions on which he had surrendered to the Ottoman authorities from the French Consulate should be observed, a High Court was formed by the Sultan Abdul Hamid. But the tickets of admission to the meetings were issued in such a manner that the Turks who wished to be present at the trial had to renounce their intention, for fear of attracting the ill-will of the Sultan, or else, those who were followers of Midhat, had to pose as his adversaries in order to be able to hear and understand the manner in which he was to be condemned. The Diplomatic Corps was present, but many foreigners found difficulty in obtaining admittance. Only a few correspondents of the foreign newspapers were admitted, and amongst the representatives of the Turkish Press only those who were faithful adherents of the Sultan.

We possess no special information on the subject of the trial, and that which we have been able to collect from those persons who were present at the debates gives us no further details than those which the *Times* corre-

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spondent (present at the Trial) sent to his newspaper. We publish, therefore, by permission of the proprietors of the *Times* the most interesting portions of their reports, together with some extracts from the debates in the Houses of Parliament on this subject, in order to give the reader some idea of this most memorable mock trial.

"*Constantinople, 28th June.*—The great State trial which began yesterday, and of which I have already forwarded you a summary of the proceedings, presented an interesting and picturesque spectacle. Around the Malta guard-house, situated in a large open space immediately outside the Imperial park of Yildiz Kiosk, a goodly number of soldiers were posted at short distances from each other, and all persons not provided with a ticket of admission were prevented from approaching the building. The few who had been fortunate enough to obtain tickets, found on approaching the Guard-House a large green oval tent, and adjoining it a considerable space enclosed by a canvas screen and covered by an awning. One side of this tent was occupied by a bench, on which sat the judges, three Mussulmans and two Christians, in black frock-coats *à la Turque* and red fezes, presided over by a grey-bearded Ulema called Sourouri Effendi, in a black robe and white turban. To the right and left of the judges sat the Public Prosecutor, the secretaries, and the subordinate judicial functionaries, and behind them stood several Imperial aides-de-camp and Palace servants. Below the bench, in a trench cut for the purpose, sat on cane chairs the ten prisoners, Mahmoud and Nouri Pashas (both brothers-in-law of the Sultan), two ex-functionaries of the Palace, three officers of the Guard, two professional wrestlers, and a Palace watchman. Behind each of the prisoners stood a common soldier. The side of the tent facing the bench was left open, so that the spectators, seated on rows of chairs under an awning, immediately behind the prisoners, could witness the proceedings. Among the audience, comprising about one hundred and twenty people, were the Persian Ambassador and other members of the Diplomatic Body, several high officials in and out of office, a score of Imperial aides-de-camp, a few officers of the Palace, several Ulema in flowing robes and white or green turbans, and the

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representatives of the Press to a limited number. The spectators might have been considerably increased, for behind them were more than a hundred chairs unoccupied.

"The first formality was the proving of the prisoners' identity, and immediately thereafter the indictment was read by three of the prosecutors, which may be briefly stated as follows:—A few days after the dethronement of Abdul Aziz, Mahmoud Damad, and Nouri Damad, engaged two professional wrestlers and a Palace watchman to assassinate their ex-Sovereign, promising them £100 each and a monthly pension of three pounds, as appears from the accounts of the Civil Lists. The crime was committed with the assistance of the Chamberlain, Fahri Bey, while Ali and Nedjib Beys, who had introduced the assassins into the Palace, mounted guard with drawn swords at the door of the room. As there was at that time a Supreme Commission, composed of Mehmed Ruchdi, Midhat, Hussein Avni, the Sheik-ul-Islam, and Mahmoud Damad, and as no important orders could be given without the concurrence of this Commission, it may be assumed that all its members must have been *cognizant* of Mahmoud and Nouri's criminal proceedings, and it is for this reason that Midhat is among the accused.

"When the indictment setting forth this theory had been read, the President, in a quiet and dignified manner, began to question the prisoners. The first called upon to state what he knew, was Mustapha, the wrestler, a man of ordinary size and not presenting any signs of abnormal muscular development. His face was of a common type and betrayed no symptoms of emotion as he related, in plain, unvarnished terms, how he had cut open the ex-Sultan's veins with a knife given to him for the purpose by Mahmoud Damad. His description, accompanied by slight and significant gestures, was brutally graphic, and made a strong impression on the spectators, more than one of the older men in the audience giving vent to their feelings of horror by audible exclamations. Mustapha's account was fully confirmed by Hadji Mehmed Pasha, who declared that together with the Chamberlain Fahri Bey and Djezairli, he had hold of Abdul Aziz whilst the crime was being perpetrated. Djezairli, who had made a full confession in his preliminary examination, was then questioned, and retracted what he had previously said. Fahri Bey, a young man, with long fair moustache, delicately-cut

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effeminate features, and of tall and slender build, was next examined, and denied the statements of the wrestler and his companion. In a tremulous tone, which gathered firmness as he proceeded, he described, from his personal observation, the mental condition of Abdul Aziz after his dethronement, and obstinately insisted that the dethroned monarch had committed suicide. The other prisoners, without endeavouring to explain how the Sultan's death occurred, successively maintained their own innocence, and found more or less plausible answers for all the questions put to them by the judges. Mahmoud Damad Pasha, a tall stout man, with regular and handsome features and large dark eyes, found most difficulty in replying, and his deep gruff voice showed more than once signs of great emotion; but he denied emphatically and indignantly the accusations brought against him by the wrestlers and others. About two o'clock Midhat was introduced and took his seat by Mahmoud Damad's side. His hair and beard had become much whiter since I last saw him, four years ago, and his complexion was still as morbidly florid as before, but he seemed well, and sought to conceal his emotion by stroking his beard, and arranging his notes, from which he was preparing to speak. Starting up suddenly and leaning on the back of his chair, he made a short speech, in which he declared himself happy to have been cited before the public tribunal, and he rendered justice to His Majesty's sentiments of equity in causing the affair to be carefully examined. To all the questions about the Supreme Commission, of which he was a member, and which must have had cognizance of the intended assassination, he replied emphatically that such a Commission existed nowhere except in the imagination of his accusers, and that all matters of State were considered by the regular Council of Ministers. When reproached by the presiding judge for not having immediately ordered a searching inquiry, he admitted that he had been guilty of this sin of omission; but at the same time he maintained that all the other Ministers were in this respect equally guilty. On the subject of his having sought refuge in the French Consulate his answers, though extremely ingenious, were not so satisfactory. Unlike the other prisoners, Midhat withdrew from the Court as soon as he finished what he had to say, and after his departure a number of witnesses were called for the Prosecution. The chief of these were three young men

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who had seen the crime perpetrated in the way the wrestlers described, and the wife of a certain Ali Bey, who, being at that time one of the ladies of Abdul Aziz' harem, had witnessed some of the incidents connected with the assassination. One of the most interesting witnesses was a frail, white-bearded Mussulman, in an old-fashioned costume, who related in a faltering voice, that he had washed the body of Abdul Aziz, and noticed a small wound in the region of the heart. The Court rose about half-past seven o'clock without the witnesses having been cross-examined. The proceedings will be continued, and possibly terminated, to-day."

"*Constantinople, 28th June.*—The trial of the persons charged with the assassination of Abdul Aziz was resumed to-day. After the counsel for the prisoners had concluded their addresses, the judges decided that the two prisoners Mustapha (the one a gardener and the other an athlete), Fahri Bey and Hadji Mehmed, were guilty of the murder, and that Ali Bey, Nedjib Bey, Midhat Pasha, Nouri Pasha and Mahoud Damad Pasha were accomplices, being privy to the crime. Sentence will be passed to-morrow."

"*Times*," 30*th June* 1881.—"*Constantinople, 28th June.* —The second day's hearing of the case against the persons accused of the murder of Abdul Aziz, the ex-Sultan, lasted for eight hours. Several additional witnesses appeared for the prosecution. Among them was Ibrahim Edhem Effendi, who acted as intermediary between the Ministers and the ex-Sultan, and who described the harsh treatment to which the latter was subjected.

"The case for the defence was then opened. Four advocates appointed by the judicial authorities spoke very feebly on behalf of the prisoners. Mahmoud Damad was justly dissatisfied with his counsel, and defended himself, and, notwithstanding evident signs of illness, refuted some of the accusations brought against him. Midhat Pasha was then called, and the President Sourouri Effendi, after remarking that Midhat had accused him of personal enmity, retired from the bench, leaving his colleague, Christoforides Effendi, to direct the proceedings. The ex-Grand Vizier, who had taken such a prominent part in the dethronement, defended himself for more than an hour against the charge of complicity in the assassination. Thoroughly conversant with the new laws of judicial

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procedure, he pointed out several mistakes which had been committed, and demanded permission to cross-question the witnesses as well as the prisoners who had made confessions; but all his demands were refused by the Court. Finding himself thus fettered, he took his stand on the solemnity of the law, and declined to defend himself any further.

"The President, after three times vainly inviting him to proceed, declared the hearing closed, and retired with the other judges to deliberate. Their verdict was, as had been foreseen from the beginning, that all the prisoners were guilty, but in different degrees. Four were declared guilty of premeditated assassination; five, including Midhat and the Sultan's two brothers-in-law, were condemned as accomplices; and the two remaining prisoners were placed in the category of aiders and abettors.

"The Court will re-assemble to-morrow morning to pass sentence. According to the Ottoman code, premeditated assassination entails capital punishment, while the lesser degrees of crime are punished by various terms of penal servitude."

29*th June*.—"The remarks and the bearing of Midhat Pasha at the trial yesterday produced, on the whole, a very favourable impression on the public, and it was not difficult to perceive that he still enjoys a certain popularity even among good Mussulmans. As numerous Palace spies were present, the Ottoman officials carefully endeavoured to hide any latent sympathy with the accused, but some of them did not altogether succeed. More than once Midhat replied very appositely in a half-ironical tone, which was much appreciated by the audience. All the details were at once transmitted to the Sultan, and Sourouri Effendi doubtless congratulated himself on having removed the Imperial displeasure from his own shoulders to those of his colleagues. As yet no evidence has been produced proving Midhat's complicity, but it is not likely that he will be acquitted. Considering that the trial has been prepared, and is being conducted under the immediate influence of the Palace, which is filled with Midhat's enemies, it would be absurd to expect impartiality and independence in the judges. I happen to know many curious facts tending to show how absurd such an expectation would be, and I may mention one by way of illustration. Yesterday morning, immediately before the trial

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began, Sourouri Effendi had a long private audience with the Sultan, and received from His Majesty certain instructions as to how the proceedings should be conducted. The most interesting part of the proceedings at the State trial yesterday was the incident which terminated in Midhat Pasha's refusal to continue his defence. The facts are briefly as follows:—The President invited the accused not to continue his defence and to intrust that duty to his counsel. Midhat replied that he would defend himself, because he had not been allowed to confer freely with the counsel officially appointed. He justified his flight to the French Consulate at Smyrna, pointed out numerous errors in the procedure, expressed astonishment at such grave accusations being founded on such insufficient evidence, reproached the Public Prosecutor with having accepted the testimony of the eunuchs, who, professing to have seen the crime committed without denouncing it, should be themselves in the dock, and ridiculed the testimony of Marco Pasha, the chief physician of the Palace at that time, who professed to have seen from the Asiatic side of the Bosphorus what took place at the Palace on the European shore, and yet could not see a wound said to have been inflicted on the body of Abdul Aziz in the region of the heart. He then demanded that the Court should examine the prisoners and witnesses in his presence, as he was not present at the previous examination, and requested that the Embassy doctors who examined the body should be summoned, offering to defray the necessary expenses at his own cost, in order to compare their report with that of Marco Pasha. On the demand of the Public Prosecutor, the Court retired to consider Midhat's request, and decided to grant it on condition that the prisoners should not be interrogated separately. To this reply Midhat opposed the text of the Code of Criminal procedure, and demanded its application, declaring that he must question those who had given evidence, in order to prove that they had committed perjury. The President answered that the article in question in the Code referred to witnesses, and not to the accused, and declared that if any person had committed perjury it would be for the Court to punish them hereafter.

"Midhat maintained that the prisoners who accused him should be regarded as witnesses against him, and considering, therefore, the decision of the tribunal as a miscarriage of justice, he declined to defend himself further, adding in a bitter tone, that he would derive little practical

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advantage from the punishment of a false witness after he was in his grave. The Court again retired for deliberation, and on returning after a few minutes, the President declared that Midhat's request could not be granted. The prisoner, having three times declined to continue his defence, the President declared the proceedings at an end, and the Court retired to deliberate, returning after about an hour with a verdict of 'Guilty' against all the accused. The Court will meet again this morning at eleven o'clock to pronounce judgment, when this extraordinary, sensational trial, conducted as I reported, will come to a close."

Later.—"Judgment was delivered this morning in the cases of the persons convicted of the murder of ex-Sultan Abdul Aziz. Nine of the accused, including the Sultan's two brothers-in-law and Midhat Pasha, were condemned to death. The remaining two accused were condemned to penal servitude.

"All the prisoners gave notice of appeal."

Reuter's Telegram.—"*Constantinople, 29th June.*—The Court pronounced judgment and delivered sentence of death upon Midhat Pasha, Mahmoud Damad Pasha, Nouri Pasha, Ali Bey, Nedjib Bey, Fahri Bey, Hadji Mehmed, Mustapha the Wrestler, and Mustapha the Gardener.

"Izzet and Sayd are each sentenced to ten years' penal servitude. The prisoners have eight days allowed them to give notice of Appeal, and the indictment and document connected with the trial will be sent to the Court which will try the Appeal."

"*Times*," *4th July* 1881.—"*Constantinople, 1st July.*—In telegraphing about the recent State Trial, I have been hitherto working under serious restrictions, which I was not allowed to mention in my telegrams. All telegraphic despatches on the subject had to be submitted to the authorities, who naturally prevented the transmission of anything that might be disagreeable to the Palace. In the circumstances, it was, of course, impossible to criticise the proceedings, or even to give a full account of what took place. I have now, fortunately, an opportunity of communicating with you freely, and I hasten to declare that the trial was little better than a parody of European judicial procedure, which has justly roused the indignation,

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not only of foreign observers, but also of many Turks, who have an elementary conception of justice and fair play. In a trial in which the political element was so prominent, the first condition to be observed was complete neutrality of the Palace, and this condition was most grossly violated. It was at the Palace that the preliminary investigation was made, under the immediate personal direction of the Sultan, who is an interested party. It was at the Palace that the prisoners were confined, judges chosen, and even the counsel for the defence appointed, without the prisoners themselves being consulted. It was at the Palace that the accused were examined and various unjustifiable means were employed to extort confessions from them—as, for example, when the Grand Eunuch, one of the three highest official personages of the Empire, struck with his fists and otherwise maltreated the Chamberlain, Fahri Bey, when under examination, in the presence of His Majesty. It was in the Palace, and under the immediate influence of the Sultan, that the amount of the punishment for the accused was considered and decided. It was in the Palace that Sourouri Effendi, the President of the Tribunal, had a private audience with the Sultan, immediately before the opening of the proceedings, while a Palace dignitary appealed to the counsel for the defence in a cajoling, half-plaintive tone, to refrain, in the fulfilment of their duty, from adding to the Sultan's already numerous embarrassments! Lastly, it was in the immediate vicinity of the Palace that the trial was held. Soldiers of the Palace garrison surrounded the Court, aides-de-camp and other Palace officials were present, while eunuchs and other confidential messengers were constantly passing to and fro between the Palace and the tribunal. A certain amount of publicity was allowed with regard to the trial, for a few tickets were distributed among the Diplomatic Corps and leading representatives of the Press, but there were at the same time serious restrictions and difficulties. The date of the trial was kept strictly secret until a few hours before the proceedings began, and newspaper correspondents, nearly all of whom are imperfectly acquainted with, or entirely ignorant of, the Turkish language and judicial procedure, were not allowed to take a dragoman with them, though three-fourths of the space reserved for the public remained all the time unoccupied. I made personal representations on this subject to some influential officials, but they all declared positively that no more

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tickets could be given. To the few who were admitted, I must say the greatest courtesy and consideration were shown by the Imperial aides-de-camp and the masters of the ceremonies, but the powers of these gentlemen were very limited. With regard to the restrictions placed on telegraphing I have already spoken above.

"It is hardly necessary to say, that with the all-pervading influence of the Palace, there could be no independence or impartiality on the part of the judicial functionaries, and no zeal in the counsel for the defence; but there was something worse than this. The ardent desire of nearly all concerned to gain the Imperial favour by securing the condemnation of the prisoners in general, and of Midhat in particular, caused certain gross violations of the guarantees provided by the Criminal Code. I may mention a few facts by way of illustration. Sourouri Effendi, who had in the secret preliminary inquiry directed the case for the Prosecution, and who is well known to be one of Midhat's bitter personal enemies, appeared at the trial as President of the Tribunal. He says, privately, by way of exculpating himself, that in the preliminary inquiry he never signed any official documents, and that during the trial of Midhat he ceded his presidency to one of the other judges; but these specious arguments increase rather than diminish his moral guilt. He refrained from signing official documents simply in order to avoid giving occasion for an appeal *en cassation*, and his making a distinction between Midhat and the other prisoners entailed new violations of judicial procedure, for it prevented Midhat from being present during a great part of the trial. Besides this, the distinction was more specious than real, for by procuring the condemnation of the other prisoners, he impliedly secured Midhat's condemnation likewise; and though he did not sit on the bench when Midhat was present, he joined his colleagues in the consulting-room when the ex-Grand Vizier's demand for permission to cross-question the witnesses was considered and rejected. Not content with having a devoted adherent like Sourouri in the President's chair, the Palace further controlled the proceedings by Raghib Bey, one of the Sultan's private secretaries, and Djevdet Pasha, the obsequious Minister of Justice, who is one of Midhat's personal enemies. These two personages sat behind the judges on a bench, and secretly gave directions in moments of hesitation and difficulty. I can state this without fear of contradiction, for

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during one of the sittings I was myself on the bench, and carefully observed what was invisible to the audience. The conduct of the Public Prosecutor was naturally in keeping with that of the chief judge. I am assured by eye-witnesses that he entered the consultation-room when the judges had retired to consider their verdict, but as I did not see this with my own eyes, I refrain from drawing any conclusion. Another act of his, however, may be commented on, because it took place in public. Midhat's attitude during the preliminary investigation seemed to indicate that he would seek to obtain the Imperial clemency by raising no difficulties, and by making no serious attempt to defend himself at the trial; and as none of the other prisoners were sufficiently conversant with the law to embarrass the Prosecution, it was hoped that the proceedings might be hurried through in a single sitting. These plans were prevented by Midhat's energetic action on the first day of the trial, and it was then considered necessary to find some means of effectually crushing him. A convenient instrument was at hand in the person of a certain Rifat Effendi, who professed to have heard Midhat say one day in Damascus that it was necessary to put Aziz out of the way, because otherwise he might have returned to power and have strangled the Minister who had deposed him. As Rifat was not in the list of witnesses, he could not be called without due notice having been given to the Court; but the Public Prosecutor overlooked this little formality and called him next day. When Midhat heard this new and unexpected piece of evidence, he very soon disposed of it, and was at no pains to conceal what he thought of Rifat's character, conduct and motive.

"A few words now to show how the prisoners were treated. According to the Code of Criminal Procedure the accused has a right to choose his own advocate, and to have free communication with him. In the present trial the advocate was chosen by some anonymous personage in the Palace, without the accused having been consulted as to the choice, and free communication was not allowed. On this subject Midhat asserts that he saw his counsel only twice. On the first occasion they had only time to read about an eighth part of the indictment, and on the second they were favoured with the presence of Raghib Bey, one of the Sultan's private secretaries, who listened to all that was said. Worse than this, with prodigious

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ingenuity each advocate was entrusted with the duty of defending prisoners belonging to different categories and employing mutually contradictory modes of defence. Refik Effendi, for example, was ordered to defend on the one hand Mustapha the Wrestler—who confessed his own guilt, and accused Fahri of having taken an active part in the assassination—and on the other hand the said Fahri, who maintained that Abdul Aziz committed suicide. In like manner Shukri Effendi had to defend on the one hand Midhat, and on the other hand Nouri Pasha, who endeavoured to exculpate himself at Midhat's expense. The idea of crippling the defence in this ingenious way is exquisitely Oriental, and rendered almost superfluous the half-pathetic, half-menacing exhortation made to the advocates at the Palace that they should refrain from adding to the Sultan's numerous embarrassments and trust to His Majesty's clemency. Equally Oriental and characteristic is the fact that the learned gentlemen who undertook the so-called defence on such conditions, showed no signs of being ashamed of themselves. It is hardly necessary to say that they carefully abstained from cross-questioning the witnesses and sifting the evidence, and did not object when the President and the Public Prosecutor assumed important facts without proving them.

"With regard to the way in which Midhat was threatened, it is difficult to speak without using strong terms of indignation. Not a particle of carefully sifted evidence against him was produced, and he was refused means of defending himself against the unsubstantiated assertions of his accusers, though he proved from the Code that he was asking no more than he had a right to demand. If his sentence is carried out, his execution will be simply a judicial murder, perpetrated from motives of political vengeance and personal enmity. As for the other prisoners, I cannot pretend to say whether they really committed the crime with which they are charged, but I can unhesitatingly assert that their guilt was not legally proved.

"The judicial inquiry, which has thus been brought to a close, was instituted, as I informed you at the time, for the purpose of removing and frightening possible conspirators, and thereby preventing a revolution for the future; but it may be doubted whether in the long run it will have the desired effect, for I noticed that even among Ottoman

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subjects, surrounded by Palace spies, the feelings of indignation were sometimes stronger than those of fear."

"*Times*," *7th July* 1881.—"*Constantinople, 5th July*—The appeal of the prisoners condemned for the assassination of Abdul Aziz will shortly be considered by the Court of Review, and it is almost certain that in spite of the gross irregularities and flagrant illegality of the proceedings the sentence will be confirmed. Immediately after the close of the trial on Wednesday, the judges of this Higher Court were summoned to the Palace and received their instructions, which will, of course, be followed, irrespective of all considerations of justice and equity. The possibility, therefore, that the judgment may be annulled and a new trial ordered, may be left out of account, and the only practical question that remains is whether the Sultan will have the sentence carried out. For some days the general opinion at the Palace was that the nine who had been condemned to death would be all executed, but I have now very good reason to believe, as I informed you on Sunday, that those who did not actually take part in the assassination will have their sentence commuted to imprisonment for life at Taïf, near Mecca. This unexpected clemency is to be attributed, at least in part, to the excitement and indignation which the mode of conducting the trial has produced both in Pera and Stamboul. The Sultan learned that the Embassy Dragomans had unanimously condemned the proceedings as irregular; that the Ambassadors had telegraphed in this sense to their respective Governments; that the newspaper correspondents had unsparingly described and criticised the way in which the proceedings had been conducted, and that even in Stamboul, among good Mussulmans, the trial had produced an impression very different from what was intended. In these circumstances His Majesty perceived that it would be dangerous to have the sentence carried out, and he determined to commute it. At the same time, in order to counteract the conviction that the whole story of the assassination was an invention, rumours were propagated, through the local Press and other channels, that nearly all the accused had made partial confessions. The *Vakyt*, for example, published yesterday mutual recriminations between Mahmoud and Nouri, and to-day those of Midhat and Mehemed Rushdi. All such stories must be accepted with great reserve, for they are certainly told.

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and possibly invented, for the purpose of prejudicing public opinion against the prisoners. In spite of these efforts to supplement defective legal evidence, many people, and among them the mother of Abdul Aziz, and some of the doctors who examined his body, still hold to the conviction that there was no assassination and that Abdul Aziz committed suicide. Without endorsing this opinion, I can confidently assert that the trial has by no means cleared up the mystery. The semi-official announcements that the *Valide Sultana has thanked the Sultan for having brought the assassins to justice are untrue, for she has all through the inquiry obstinately maintained that her son perished by his own hand, and that she was partly to blame for having given him the famous scissors.*"

"I am now in a position to explain why the prosecution showed such anxiety to get Midhat condemned, and employed such unjustifiable means for this purpose. It may be remembered that some months ago the Sultan was greatly alarmed by a revolutionary propaganda, of which the chief instigator was believed to be the ex-Khedive. A judicial functionary, who has since taken a prominent part in the trial, was ordered to make an inquiry, and came to the conclusion that Midhat was implicated in the propaganda. The conclusion was probably erroneous, but it made a strong impression on the Sultan's mind, and from that moment Midhat's fate was decided. As no legal proofs of his complicity in the seditious agitation could be produced, other means had to be employed for getting rid of him, and the regicide inquiry was used for this purpose."

"*Times*," 11*th July* 1881.—"*Constantinople*, 10*th July*.—During the last few days representations have been twice made to the Sultan by the British Ambassador concerning the State trial. It is believed at the Palace that Lord Dufferin acted on the first occasion spontaneously, and on the second occasion by the express orders of Lord Granville. The later communication is said to be couched in strong terms, urging His Majesty for his own sake to refrain from carrying out the sentence of the tribunal. The Sultan has received also a telegram from the Ottoman Embassy in London, in which Musurus Pasha describes the unfavourable impression produced by the trial in England, and implores His Majesty to prevent at least the capital punishment being inflicted."

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"*Times*," *28th July* 1881.—"*Constantinople, 26th July.*—Since the judgment was pronounced at the State trial considerable hesitation and embarrassment have harassed the Sultan and given rise to numberless exaggerated and contradictory rumours, which I have thought it undesirable to report at the time of their production, because they were in some cases manifestly without foundation and in others largely improbable. During the last few days, however, an attempt has been made on the part of the Sultan to lessen his responsibility in the matter, through the instrumentality of a Grand Council, comprising the highest dignitaries of the State both in and out of office. The Council contained twenty-seven members, of whom five were ex-Grand Viziers, fourteen were Ministers in and out of office, and eight were Ulemas. We now hear that in that solemn assembly, which sat at the Palace for three days, opinions were divided, and finally an important minority courageously voted against carrying out the extreme penalty of the law, especially in the case of those of the accused who had not confessed, and against whom no positive proof of guilt had been elicited at the trial. This minority is said to have included most of the more prominent members, viz.:—four Grand Viziers and the present Prime Minister, three Ministers in the Cabinet, one of the most influential high ecclesiastics, and one former Minister. The majority is said to have voted in the sense of a confirmation of the judgment given at the trial, subject, of course, to the exercise of the Imperial clemency. It included ten Ministers in office, most of them specially antagonistic to Midhat Pasha, and seven Ulemas. The Sultan has chosen to adopt the opinion of the minority and to decide that the accused shall be banished for life. It is not quite clear why, in the circumstances, His Majesty should have chosen this course; for it was supposed that the Council had been called together with a view to make it share the responsibility of the signature of the death-warrants, which His Majesty hesitated to sign without the direct sanction of the great officers of State. The repugnance of the Sultan to have criminals executed is well known, and since his accession he is said never to have sanctioned a single capital sentence. While securing the removal of the criminals to some distant and safe locality, where they will be powerless to work harm, he avoids at the same time the issuing of the fatal decree,

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so repugnant to his feelings. Much must be attributed to the action of our own Government. Brilliant, indeed, has been the commencement of the mission of Lord Dufferin, who has already gained much favour in public opinion here both native and foreign. Considering the popularity and prominent personal value of at least one of the accused Pashas, the impression that his life has been saved through the intervention of the British Ambassador tends to remove much of the popular clamour which had lately become so loud against British influence, and it is a significant sign of the times that one of the semi-official Turkish organs publishes to-day an article advocating a close alliance between England and Turkey. A few months ago this same officially inspired print loudly proclaimed that England's friendship was more hurtful to Turkey than the enmity of any other Power."

"*Times*," *1st August* 1881.—"*Constantinople, 30th July*.—The Sultan is greatly disappointed with the result of the State trial. He expected that the proceedings would have received the approval of public opinion, both in Turkey and in Western Europe, and he finds that the reverse has been the case. The Court of Appeal, as I ventured to predict, confirmed the sentence; but the Ulemas, who are the custodians and expounders of the Sacred Law, made an evasive reply to the questions addressed to them, and in the Grand Council, composed of Ministers and other great personages, there was a large and influential section of members who recommended that the capital sentence should not be carried out. Both in the Assembly of Ulemas and in the Grand Council the proceedings were very curious, as showing that, even under the present reign of terror, there are a few men who have the courage to maintain openly opinions which they know to be unpalatable in the highest quarters. The obsequious Sheik-ul-Islam, for example, who wished to cover the illegal proceedings by art, encountered a determined resistance from the Mufti Emini, whose duty it is to give a written decision to any legal questions which may be addressed to him. The old man said in a calm decided tone: 'During my long life, I have never willingly given an unjust decision, and now, when I have one foot in the grave, I shall certainly not begin to deviate knowingly from the path of right. The accused have been tried and condemned

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by a Civil tribunal, according to laws and a procedure with which we have no professional acquaintance. If we are to give a decision, the case must be tried again from the commencement, according to the procedure prescribed by the Sacred Law. To the question as it at present stands, the Sacred Law provides no answer, and consequently no *fetva* can be issued.'

"Similar courage was shown by some of the civil functionaries, especially Haireddin Pasha, who, with his usual frankness and fearlessness, condemned the proceedings of the Criminal Tribunal in no measured terms. The ex-Grand Vizier, Safvet and Kadri, spoke more cautiously in the same sense. Osman, Mahmoud Nedim, and Djevdet, Minister of Justice, were in favour of having the sentence executed. Soubhi Pasha tried to find a middle course. He admitted that irregularities might have been committed by the Tribunal, but at the same time maintained that the Council had no power to reverse the decision. This argument was tersely refuted by Haireddin, who reminded his colleagues that they were called upon, not to reverse the decision, but simply to give advice regarding the exercise of the Imperial clemency. The Sultan, as you have heard, has commuted the capital sentence as far as his two brothers-in-law are concerned, on the ground that these personages acted according to stringent superior orders. In this way one of the objects for which the trial was instituted is attained more completely than by executing the accused, for the ex-Sultan Murad, who is supposed still to have adherents, is thereby represented as being the real culprit."

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Parliamentary Debates, 1st July 1881.—"Mr M'COAN asked the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether any other report than that published at the time had been received from Dr Dickson (page 90), physician to Her Majesty's Embassy at Constantinople, and a member of the Medical Commission, who examined the body of the late Sultan Abdul Aziz immediately after his death, of the result of such examination, and, if there be, whether he will lay it upon the table of the House; and also, whether in the interests of justice and humanity, and in view of the report made at the time by such Medical Commission, it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to interpose its friendly good offices at the Porte, or directly with the Sultan, to save Midhat Pasha, and

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any or all of the other persons convicted with him yesterday of complicity in the alleged murder of Abdul Aziz, from execution of the sentences severally passed upon them. He desired to express, before the question was answered, his absolute distrust of the capacity and probity of the members of the Turkish court which conducted the recent trial; and, from his own personal knowledge, he accepted all the responsibility of stating that they were persons not entitled to the respect of Europe, or of that House.

"Sir CHARLES W. DILKE—Sir, the substance of a report by Dr Dickson was laid before Parliament (*Turkey*, No. 3, 1876), and no further report has been received. Lord Granville is in communication with Lord Dufferin with regard to the recent State trial; but it would be premature to make any announcement at present."

4th July 1881.—"Earl DE LA WARR asked the noble Earl the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether any information could be given with reference to the trial of Midhat Pasha, which was now proceeding at Constantinople. He was quite aware that this was a question of great delicacy as regarded interference on the part of Her Majesty's Government; but it could not be otherwise than a matter of deep interest to their Lordships, and to the country generally, to know that all that was possible was being done to insure a just trial, as upon the issue of the trial might depend the life of a great and distinguished statesman.

"Earl GRANVILLE—My Lords, I have been in communication with Lord Dufferin on this subject, which is exciting great interest in Europe. Of the trial I have received no authentic report, and it would clearly not be right for me to express any official opinion upon it. I am not, at the present moment, able to give your Lordships any further information on the subject."

7th July 1881.—"Mr STAVELEY HILL asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he had any information from Constantinople, with regard to the fate of Midhat Pasha.

"Sir CHARLES W. DILKE—I can give no information upon this subject. The telegrams which have passed, up to the present time, do not show what are Lord Dufferin's views; but representations are being made."

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11th July 1881.—"Viscount FOLKESTONE (for Mr Staveley Hill) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople has been instructed to call the attention of the advisers of the Sultan to the allegations of the grave irregularities in the trial of Midhat Pasha, and to urge upon His Majesty that the execution of that distinguished statesman upon the result of such a trial may be regarded as a judicial murder brought about by political rivals.

"Mr M'COAN asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Christoferides Effendi who presided at the recent trial of Midhat Pasha is identical with the person of the same name who, in May 1871, was an employé of the Turkish Ministry of Police.

"Sir CHARLES W. DILKE—Sir, with regard to the first question, I have to say that this is a somewhat delicate matter. I have already said that communications are passing. Looking to the object which the hon. Member has in view, it would not be wise that I should make any public statement at the present time. The second question I must answer in the affirmative."

21st July 1881.—"Mr M'COAN asked if there was any truth in the newspaper report of that day that Midhat Pasha was to be sent in exile to a place near Mecca.

"Sir CHARLES DILKE said that up to four o'clock that afternoon no telegram had reached the Foreign Office to that effect."

22nd July 1881.—"Mr M'COAN asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he had received any information with regard to the execution of the sentence passed on Midhat Pasha.

"Sir CHARLES W. DILKE said that within the last forty-eight hours they had received no further information from Lord Dufferin on the subject.

"Mr M'COAN said in view of a telegram of peculiar significance published that morning, and which seemed to point to an almost immediate decision in regard to the sentence passed at the recent State trial at Constantinople, he must plead the urgency and gravity of the case if he trespassed upon the time of the House for a few moments, and would, if necessary, conclude with a motion. The case was, shortly, this:—One of the most noted figures in European politics, a statesman of the highest antecedents

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and reputation ('No!'), at least, for an Eastern statesman, had been tried in a way notorious to the House, and his life at that moment was trembling in the balance. He did not say that Her Majesty's Government could bring any more pressure to bear on the Porte than they had done with reference to the subject. He was aware of the delicacy and difficulty, probably the impracticability, of any Government putting pressure upon the Sultan, except in the way of friendly intercession, which so far, had had no effect. He therefore now wished to elicit from the House its opinion in reference to the recent trial and the action of the Turkish Government with respect to it, and he had reason to believe that such expression of opinion would have the best possible effect at Constantinople. Midhat Pasha, after passing a distinguished official career, became Governor of Bulgaria, which he found overrun with brigandage, and in such a state that the revenue could not be collected. In a few months he put down brigandage, caused the revenue to be collected, and, under his rule, Bulgaria became one of the most prosperous provinces of the Turkish Empire. One of his most persistent opponents was the Russian Ambassador. Midhat was doing everything to revive European confidence in Turkey, and as that did not suit Russian views, General Ignatieff became his most persistent enemy, and intrigued against him.

"Mr NEWDEGATE rose to order. He submitted that the Honourable and learned member was asking the House to give an expression of opinion upon a motion for adjournment, which was placing the House in a false position, because it was precluded by its own forms from giving an opinion on that subject on a motion of adjournment.

"Mr SPEAKER said that, as the House was aware, the only question on which the judgment of the House could be taken on the motion for adjournment was whether the House should or should not adjourn.

"Mr M'COAN said he would make his observations very brief. Subsequently Midhat Pasha became Governor of Bagdad. It was said by some that Midhat Pasha was a poor man, and therefore, presumably, an honest man; by others that he was a rich man, and therefore, presumably, a corrupt man; and he was sorry to say that a very high authority—the Prime Minister—had given expression to the latter opinion in an article he published. This, however, he knew: that though the revenues of the

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provinces he governed, passed through Midhat Pasha's hands, he returned from each of them a poor man—in one case not having sufficient funds to pay his own and his retinue's travelling expenses, and in another not being possessed of £500. Afterwards he became Grand Vizier, and his famous Constitution elicited from Liberal politicians everywhere praise and admiration, and it was no fault of his that that admirable scheme did not become an organic law of Turkey. He failed in his efforts to reform the Administration, and to turn corrupt misrule into good government. Subsequently, both in Syria and Smyrna, he carried out the same principles of administrative reform. He was undoubtedly a party to the deposition of the Sultan; but it was widely believed that he was no party to his death, if he did not die by suicide. The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs had admitted that the Report of the Medical Commission was in favour of the opinion that the death was caused by suicide. Dr Dickson, the physician to the English Embassy at Constantinople, joined in that opinion, and had assured him (Mr M'Coan) that after the most careful examination of the body he was clearly of opinion that it was a case of suicide. But what happened at the so-called trial? Why, that two of the doctors, who had as Commissioners certified that it was a case of suicide—Marco Pasha and Dr Castro—actually at the trial gave evidence to the effect that, in their opinion, death had been caused by murder. Such evidence was worthy of the tribunal before which it had been given. In a reply to a question put by him, the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs had stated that the President at the trial had been formerly an employé of the Municipal Police at Constantinople, and that he had himself positive knowledge of the corruption of the man when he held a judicial position. He had also evidence, though not so direct, that this same person had continued to be one of the most corrupt judicial functionaries in the service of the Porte; and also evidence, less direct still, that the other members of the Court which tried the State prisoners were of no whit better character. No European community, therefore, would hang a dog upon the finding of such a tribunal. He knew that Her Majesty's Government could not interfere directly, and that an unofficial or indirect appeal on the part of Her Majesty's Ambassador might have no effect, but he was proud to

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know that no other opinion in Europe could have such an effect upon the Porte, or in the Palace, as that of the House of Commons, because it was thoroughly understood there that such opinion reflected that of the country, and so influenced the action of the Government. He begged to move the adjournment of the House, in the hope that such opinion would be expressed on behalf of an innocent, distinguished, and falsely condemned statesman.

"THE O'DONOGHUE seconded the motion.

"Motion made and question proposed.—'That this House do now adjourn'—(Mr M'COAN).

"Sir H. DRUMMOND-WOLFF said he would not follow the last speaker in criticising the trial that had taken place at Constantinople, a trial which he thought would not be considered satisfactory in this country. He would not make an appeal to the right honourable gentleman at the Head of the Government to interfere in regard to the trial; but he would remind him that upon more than one occasion the interference of the British Government had saved the lives of men who had been condemned to death in Turkey. He trusted that the Premier would see his way to take some steps to bring the influence of Her Majesty's Government to bear upon the Porte, with a view of, at any rate, reducing the sentence passed on Midhat Pasha. He was a man of what was called a very liberal mind, and had discharged his duties in a remarkably impartial manner, and with much enlightenment, considering the difficulties under which he had had to labour. He ventured to suggest that the Premier would be doing a graceful act in using his great influence on behalf of this unfortunate man.

"Mr ASHMEAD BARTLETT said it was remarkable to notice the intense interest taken in Turkish Pashas by the honourable gentleman, who had lost no opportunity hitherto of denouncing them. The trial had by no means been so unfair as was represented, and the evidence against most of the accused was very strong. Everyone sympathised with Midhat Pasha, who was a great statesman and patriot, and it would be a most unfortunate thing if the trial resulted in his death. He doubted, however, if there was any danger of that. The present Sultan was a most humane and kind-hearted man—and neither Midhat Pasha nor the other two Ministers who were condemned with him were in danger of execution. He thought the question might be safely left to the

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discretion of Her Majesty's Government without any formal expression of opinion by the House. It would be most unfortunate if any representations were made on behalf of the other condemned Ministers, Mahmoud Damad and Nouri Pashas, who were openly corrupt, and were guilty of almost every possible offence against the interests of their country and of civilisation. It would be a matter of rejoicing if they could be brought to justice. It would be better if representations were made diplomatically by the Government without the direct interference of the House; and although the influence of the British Government was much less than it used to be, he had no doubt they would have due effect.

"Mr GLADSTONE—I do not know that much advantage would be gained by a prolongation of the discussion. In answer to the appeals made, especially by the honourable Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond-Wolff), I think I can state very briefly what is a very simple matter—namely, the limits of action laid down for us, and the fact that we have not scrupled to act within them. Those limits were necessarily narrow. I was sorry to hear the honourable gentleman who made this motion introduce statements of so pointed a character respecting the individuals who have been called upon to conduct the inquiry. He may be quite warranted in all he says; but it is perfectly impossible that we can know that, and it is perfectly impossible, in justice to those individuals, to go in this House into the circumstances of which he speaks. If the trial be bad, an attempt to re-try the case in an Assembly of this kind, with the view to an expression of opinion on the definitive merits of the case, would likewise, be open to much objection.

"The real state of the case is this—Have we a right of intervention in a matter of this kind? Clearly we have none. I use the words 'right of intervention.' But there are considerations of policy and humanity which have, on various occasions, led to representations, more or less formal, which are in the nature of interference with private affairs, but which are grounded on a sincere and dispassionate anxiety, in the first place, for the general principles of humanity and justice, and, in the second place, for the interests of the great Power in whose counsels you appear to intervene. Unquestionably, though we have no power to pass a final sentence on the nature of the proceedings in Constantinople, there has been a

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public opinion in regard to these proceedings, both in Constantinople and Europe generally, such as to make us believe that it would be greatly for the interest of the Sultan of Turkey were he moved to pursue a humane and liberal course. Recognising these facts, we have not scrupled to act upon them. So early as 4th July instructions were sent to Lord Dufferin to use the least obstrusive, but, at the same time, the most confidential, direct and effective means to make the kind of representations which we desired to be made. Lord Dufferin has, I think, with as much tact and delicacy as are in the possession of any man, and with, at the same time, as much good feeling and zeal, acted readily upon these instructions, and has, to the best of his power, made representations in the general sense I have described. We have no doubt whatever that a lenient and a considerate course will give satisfaction to the enlightened opinion of Europe, and will be greatly for the interests and peace of Turkey. Having said that, I think I had better add no more. I see no advantage in implicating or attempting to pass judgment on anyone. We have stood on the purely general consideration I have described; and I believe the House will be disposed to think, on the general statement I have made, that without any special merit on our part, we have discharged our duty.

"Mr J. COWEN said he was sure the House had listened with satisfaction to the humane and generous observations of the Prime Minister. He trusted his hon. friend, the Member for Wicklow, having elicited such an expression of opinion, would be content, and not push his motion to a division. He entirely sympathised with him in the course he had pursued. It was desirable that the British Parliament should have an opportunity of recording its opinion of the very exceptional proceedings under the name of law that had recently taken place at Constantinople. Midhat Pasha was a distinguished Turkish Pasha. He had served his country ably and honourably in the highest offices the Sultan could confer. He had proved himself to be a friend of England and of progressive principles. He (Mr Cowen) had the privilege of his acquaintance, and he could confirm the high character that the hon. Member for Wicklow had given him. He recognised the delicacy of the position, and he could appreciate the difficulties that the Premier had referred to. To interfere with the action of the Turkish Courts,

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however they were constituted, might be regarded as trenching upon the freedom of an independent State. If representations were made in a too emphatic way, they might be resented by the Sultan, and have the very opposite effect than was designed. This was a possibility which they should all bear in mind, and of which the Government, no doubt, were conscious. They should remember also that it was impossible for the House to review the proceedings of the Constantinople tribunal. They might have their opinions; but they were not, and could not, be informed of all the details. But still, admitting all this, the English Government had on other occasions interceded with foreign rulers on behalf of fallen statesmen or popular leaders. There were many instances in history where there had been such friendly interference; and they had, therefore, the warrant of precedent for doing what was now suggested. He trusted that the Government would—with all the energy that they felt themselves justified in using, but at the same time, with the necessary friendliness—intercede on behalf of Midhat Pasha. The Prime Minister had said that instructions to that effect would be sent to Lord Dufferin, and the House and the country would feel satisfied that any appeal by him would be supported by a man of great ability, high character, and of generous spirit. Having called attention to the subject and made this representation, he would advise that the matter be allowed to rest in the hands of Her Majesty's Government.

"Mr M'COAN asked leave to withdraw the motion."

29th July 1881.—"Lord STRATHEDEN AND CAMPBELL, in rising to ask the Government whether their influence at Constantinople is being exercised to arrest proceedings in the case of Midhat Pasha, said he hoped that in the absence—which he regretted—of the noble earl the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, some member of the Government would be able to give an answer to his question. No doubt all the members of the Government knew what answer to give, because the Prime Minister really decided these matters, and his colleagues must be in possession of his views. The fate of Midhat Pasha was a question in which the people of this country took great interest. There was no doubt that he had not had a fair trial, and obstacles were put in the way of his

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defending himself. There was little doubt that Abdul Aziz had put an end to his own life; and he thought that the public law of Europe, about which so much had been said of late years, should be put in motion on his behalf. It might be said that public law would be an obstacle to exercising influence to arrest proceedings in the case; but if that were so, public law had been set at nought by every ambassador whom the Queen had employed at Constantinople recently.

"Lord STANLEY OF ALDERLEY said he regretted the course which the noble lord had taken as damaging to his consistency, since he usually respected the law of nations; but now he asked the Government to do something which was quite contrary to it. He was not only asking them to obtain a commutation of the sentence passed on Midhat Pasha, but to arrest proceedings. A month ago the noble lord intimated that the Foreign Secretary had not the control of the Foreign Office, but that the Prime Minister had; and the Prime Minister had stated in 'another place' that this was a case in which the Government had no right to interfere. The noble lord should have been satisfied with that answer. When Midhat Pasha was Grand Vizier he was responsible for what was going on at Constantinople; and after the time that Sultan Abdul Aziz Khan's death took place, he did not institute any enquiry into any of the circumstances that had surrounded it. No doubt, it was unfortunate that in the recent trial the Ottoman Government had adopted European forms, and it would have been better if the Turkish Government had followed their own forms of trial in this case. However, he had no doubt that substantial justice had been done to Midhat Pasha. The present question was, moreover, unnecessary, because the sentence had already been commuted, and Midhat Pasha was going into a healthy climate, where there need be no fear on account of his health. Midhat Pasha was a good administrator in Bulgaria, but he had been too much praised for what he had done, and, on the whole, he was an ignorant, rather than a learned man. However, in Midhat Pasha's present situation, he would rather not make further observations upon his administration of affairs. There was no ground for any alarm in regard to the country to which he was banished.

"The Earl of KIMBERLEY said he was sorry that his

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noble friend the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs was not present to answer the question of the noble lord. As to the actual form of the question, he agreed with his noble friend opposite (Lord Stanley of Alderley) that it would be an extraordinary interference on the part of one Government to exercise its influence upon another, in order to arrest proceedings which the latter had thought it necessary to take in regard to an accusation against a subject of that Government. But probably his noble friend desired to know what course had been taken by Her Majesty's Government in the whole matter; and what he had to say was that in a question of so much delicacy, involving the internal Government of the Porte, and touching the Sultan himself, Her Majesty's Government had not thought that it would be desirable to exercise any direct advice or interference; but feeling, as they did, an interest in this matter, they had been able, through Lord Dufferin, in a perfectly private and unofficial manner, to express their wish that it might be the pleasure of the Sultan to deal with this matter in a merciful spirit. He was not in a position to state that it had been officially notified that the sentence passed upon the incriminated Pashas had been commuted; but he had good reason to believe that the statement in the newspapers alluded to, that the sentence had been commuted to banishment to Arabia, was true."

The result of the humanitarian intervention on the part of the English Government was that the death sentence on Midhat Pasha was changed to one of imprisonment for life.

The Sultan Abdul Hamid knew far better than any one else that Midhat was innocent, and that Abdul Aziz had committed suicide, as was fully proved by the Medical report; if Abdul Hamid had had genuine proof on which to accuse Midhat before the eyes of Europe and the law, nothing could have prevented the death penalty from being executed, since he had sworn to put an end to Midhat Pasha. Although the Sultan was thus foiled in his attempt to put away Midhat by form of law, he did not relinquish his intention, but sought other clandestine means to attain it. How this was accomplished, will be proved by documents in the following pages.

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CHAPTER XII

EXILE OF MIDHAT PASHA

THE Sultan, yielding to the humane intervention of England and Europe, named the town of Taïf, in Arabia, as the place of exile for Midhat Pasha. Taïf is a town situated to the south of Mecca, and is renowned for its verdure and for its surrounding fortress. Midhat Pasha, Damad Mahmoud Djelaleddin and Nouri Pashas, with the other prisoners, were taken by a special steamer and landed at Djeddah, and reached Taïf by way of Mecca. The Sheik-ul-Islam, Haïroullah Effendi, who had been on a pilgrimage to Mecca when he was accused of being an accomplice in the alleged murder of Abdul Aziz, had been imprisoned at Taïf, where Midhat found him on his arrival.

After the banishment of Midhat, his family were detained in exile in Smyrna, and his son and daughter sought refuge from any possible contingency at the British Consulate, where they remained for three months, returning to their mother when the storm of these events had passed. Two years after his exile, Midhat sent his family the most alarming information in his letters, of which we give a translation. These letters were carried to Smyrna by men who were the devoted friends of the family, and who made the journey for that express purpose.

Translation of an Autograph Letter from Midhat Pasha (from the Prison of Taïf) to his Family.

"MY DEAR FAMILY,—Nearly a month ago I sent you a letter through Saïd Bey—the last that I was able to

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write before this—in which I gave you the list of the numbered letters which I had previously sent you. A week after, I became ill with an abscess on the right shoulder-blade. Later on, this was diagnosed as being anthrax. It caused me very great suffering. The only doctor here is quite a young man, without any experience. My companions in exile,[1] seeing my condition, became very uneasy, and, without consulting me, took upon themselves to address a letter to the Governor of Mecca, asking that a doctor might be sent here. But they did not receive any reply from this personage, who, however, had just received through an aide-de-camp sent from Constantinople the firman bestowing on him the rank of marshal, and also strict secret orders that we must perish, either by starvation or by some other means.

"To this end the Vali chose Major Bekir Effendi, who was charged with our surveillance and with the execution of this mission. As soon as he arrived, Bekir dismissed our servants and cooks and reduced our rations. I was in bed, suffering from the pain of this abscess, when Bekir came and told me the orders he had received, which he did in a severe voice, with a rough tone and without the least touch of feeling. He told us that we must be contented with a little soup and with vegetables, which would be served to us in one of those bowls used by the soldiers, and that we were strictly forbidden to procure other food than that which was provided for us. At the same time he forbade us to have our linen washed, a task which each one of us must perform for himself. Besides this, he took away the inkstand, pen and paper that was at our disposition, and everything necessary for correspondence. Luckily, I had burned your letters, although they contained nothing compromising, but complications might have arisen from them if they had fallen into their hands.

"This part of his mission accomplished, Major Bekir had the wife and child of Haïroullah Effendi, who were occupying a separate house, sent off to Mecca that very night. Our servants and cooks followed very soon afterwards.

"The treatment to which we are submitted is one means of many to get rid of us. For my companions have always been accustomed to luxury and ease, and even though hunger

[1] The Sheik-ul Islam Haïroullah Effendi, and the two brothers-in-law of Abdul Hamid—Damad Mahmoud Djelaleddin and Damad Nouri Pashas.

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may oblige them to eat the poor food given to the soldiers, their health cannot endure such a regimen, and they will certainly end by succumbing, but only after how much suffering and misery! I cannot give you an idea of the melancholy into which they are plunged. They are constantly praying Heaven for their deliverance. As to me, what I find the most painful, is being deprived of my servant, whom they removed by force, and whose attentions were more than ever necessary to me at a moment when my state of health has got so much worse.

"The refusal of the Governor-General of Mecca to send a doctor, and the speech and most unjustifiable conduct of Bekir, contributed not a little to the aggravation of my condition. I had no other consolation than the hope of quitting this life and of at last succumbing to the sufferings that I endured. But it cannot be helped; the supreme hour has not yet come, and I must still suffer. I had lost all hope, although Heaven in its mercy often reserves consolations for the unhappy, and relief for their sorrows.

"I was thus in despair of ever getting well, when, thanks to the care of my companions, who applied a poultice, the abscess burst and continued suppurating for a fortnight. Since then the pain has diminished and the wound is beginning to heal. At the moment when Haïroullah Effendi's wife and child, and our servants also, were embarking at Djeddah for Constantinople, a telegraphic order caused them to return to Taif in company with Major Bekir. Thus, when on the point of becoming free, these unhappy beings were once more cast into prison.

"This is a brief statement of our situation, and if no change takes place in the conditions of our existence, it will be very difficult for me to send letters as hitherto. The linen, food and money that you wish to send me will never reach me. Perhaps you could find some one who might be able to send me my false teeth. Give up any idea of sending me money, for we are now forbidden to buy any really nourishing food, such as meat, vegetables, rice, etc., and as to coffee, coal, and soap, I have plenty of money to buy those. I embrace you all affectionately.

"(Signed) MIDHAT.

"8*th Djemazi-ul-Ahir*, 1301" (1883).
(*Year of the Hegira.*)

"*P.S.*—Every morning they bring a bowl of soup for eight people, a dish of radish leaves or something of that

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nature; in the evening we all assemble round these bowls and those who are very hungry are obliged to eat from them; the others content themselves with a piece of bread kept back from the day before. Those who have money buy soap and coal, and heat water for washing their linen. Those who are without the necessary means use water mixed with cinders. As to me, who have no teeth, I live on bread-soup. The abscess is nearly cured, but my weakness is very great. As I have already told you, all these means are taken with the sole aim of destroying us. Time will show who will be the first to give me the *coup de grâce*."

Another Autograph Letter from Midhat Pasha.

"MY DEAR WIFE, MY BELOVED DAUGHTERS, MY DEAR SON ALI HAIDAR,—This letter is perhaps the last that I shall ever write you; for, as I told you in my two preceding letters, it is now proved that in modifying our regimen and in depriving us of all means of correspondence, they have no other aim than that of getting rid of us. Besides which they have tried to poison us.

"Ten days ago, my servant Arif, whom I had ordered to buy some milk through one of the officers, discovered when he was boiling it that it was poisoned. Four days after this, Arif, having bought some meat, prepared it in the evening and placed it in his room. In the morning we perceived that the metal of the saucepan bore traces of poison. Several days afterwards they poisoned the water in the jug from which we drink. All these attempts have been foiled by the attention and watchfulness of the servant. Seeing this want of success, they will try other means. We are surrounded by very dangerous people; especially Major Tcherkesse Bekir, one of the college companions of the famous Tcherkesse Hassan,[1] who was sent two years ago from Constantinople to keep watch over us. This Tcherkesse Bekir has, as accomplices, three non-commissioned officers, who lodge with us. Every day the most sinister orders are transmitted to the Vali, Osman Pasha (Governor of Mecca), who in return for his services has received a Marshal's bâton. Yesterday there arrived Colonel Tcherkesse Mehemet Lutfi, always with

[1] Who had killed the Ministers in Midhat Pasha's house in 1876.

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the same orders. We are face to face with very great danger and are threatened with the blackest designs; I believe that there is little hope that we shall escape. Perhaps even before receiving this letter you will learn the news of my death. In this case it is useless to suffer great affliction. May the merciful God pardon us our sins! And if we are destined to succumb, there can be no greater happiness than to be martyrs in a holy cause.

"My supreme desire is that you should live in peace, united around the family hearth. May the Almighty God have you in His Holy keeping!

"(Signed) MIDHAT.

"10 *Redjeb* 1301, *O.S.*"
(*24th September* 1883).

Madame Midhat had these facts brought to the knowledge of Lord Dufferin, at Constantinople. At the same time the Duke of Sutherland, who was going to Constantinople, passed through Smyrna and went to see Midhat's family, assuring them that he would do all in his power to persuade the Sultan to give Midhat Pasha his liberty. Lord Dufferin made representations to the Ottoman Government, and charged the Dragoman belonging to the British Consulate at Djeddah to procure news of Midhat's health from the Grand Shereef of Mecca. The Grand Shereef, Abdul Mutalib Pasha, assured the Dragoman that Midhat was perfectly well.[1] But the Sultan, terrified at the relations between the Grand Shereef Abdul Mutalib and the English Dragoman, accused the

[1] *Times*, 5th June 1882, page 3, col. 2.—"Constantinople, 3rd June. According to a despatch from Djeddah, the Dragoman of the British Consulate at that place has gone to Mecca, the bearer of a letter from the British Government to the Grand Shereef, expressing the friendly sentiments of England towards him, and asking for news of Midhat Pasha.

"The Grand Shereef, in reply, is stated to have assured the Dragoman that Midhat Pasha was in no danger of any kind. This step on the part of England has produced considerable sensation among the Arabs, who continue to attribute to the British Government designs of gaining ground and influence in Arabia."

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former of holding secret relations with England, with a view to saving Midhat and combining with him against his person ; he therefore disgraced him, throwing him into the fortress of Taïf. It was on this account that Midhat, without knowing the real reason, wrote the following letter to his family on the arrest of the Grand Shereef :—

Another Letter from Midhat Pasha to his Family.

"MY DEAR FAMILY,—Two days ago a very strange event occurred. During the night of 30th August, at midnight, the house of the Emir of Mecca, Shereef Abdul Mutalib (who was then in residence at Taïf), was suddenly surrounded by four battalions of Infantry and four guns. At daybreak he was torn from his bed and conducted to the fortress where we are imprisoned. He has been replaced in his office by the Shereef Abdullah Pasha. It is believed that Abdul Mutalib will be sent to Constantinople or elsewhere. He is accused of having kept up a correspondence with the English. The fact that this personage, who, in his anxiety to please in a high quarter, caused us so much suffering, is now thrown into a wretched hole of a prison, is a very great example. However, we can only pity his fate, when we think of his great age—he is a hundred—and that he is a descendant of the Prophet.

"(Signed) MIDHAT.

"*2nd September* 1299, *O.S.*"
(*14th September* 1882.)

Whilst the Sultan was assuring England of his good intentions, he was at the same time maturing his tyrannical plan of execution. Damad Nouri Pasha had already died—mad ; but it was extremely difficult to put a Sheik-ul-Islam to death on a false accusation, and above all before the "Softa" (Theological Students and Ulemas, of whom he is the Supreme Head); for this reason, Haïroullah Effendi was placed on one side. The Vali of Hedjaz—Marshal Osman Nouri Pasha—received an order by special

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envoys to see to the execution of the murder. On the 26th of April, 1883, they entered Midhat's room during the night, and by means of a cord they strangled him in his bed without the least resistance. Damad Mahmoud Djelaleddin Pasha attempted to defend himself, but was overcome by brute force. An eye-witness of the crime, Haïroullah Effendi, sent a letter of condolence to the family of Midhat Pasha, of which we publish a translation.

To the Honourable Family of Midhat Pasha.

"I humbly present my most respectful homage to Madame and Mesdemoiselles Midhat Pasha, and also to his son Ali Haydar Bey, with the expression of my profound regret and sympathy on the occasion of the death of our beloved master, Midhat Pasha. May the Almighty grant them as great a measure of happiness as there are grains of dust in the earth that covers his martyred remains.

"You will have heard of his tragic death and of the circumstances under which it occurred. His Highness did not succumb, as has been announced in the newspapers, to the illness from which he was suffering. It is true that he had anthrax, but it was not bubonic. The truth is that in the same night and at the same moment both Midhat Pasha and Damad Mahmoud Pasha were strangled. May the Divine clemency and blessing be upon them.

"There are many things that I ought to tell you, but I dare not write more fully, as I am in dread of our persecutors. Kindly let me hear that you have received this letter, and do not divulge the name of him who sent it. If you have anything that you wish to ask me you can write to me.

"Half of the Pasha's possessions have been stolen by the employés, the rest has been sent to Constantinople.

"The servant, who so faithfully served our lamented Midhat Pasha, is well worthy of being helped. The Pasha, shortly before his death, left him £T100. He gave me a note signed to this effect, which I enclose to you, begging that you will send the poor man the money.

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"I beg you, Madame and Mesdemoiselles, to accept the expression of my respectful affection.

"HASSAN HAÏROULLAH.
(ex-Sheik-ul-Islam.)

"TAÏF, *15th Zilkade*, 1301" (1883).

Wishing to render a last service to his country, the Sheik-ul-Islam, Haïroullah Effendi, also sent to the Reform Party a record of the details of this assassination, which is contained in the following chapter.

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CHAPTER XIII

DETAILS OF THE ASSASSINATION OF MIDHAT PASHA, ACCORDING TO INFORMATION DERIVED FROM HAÏR-OULLAH EFFENDI

IN the course of the third year of his exile at Taïf, Midhat Pasha had a large tumour on his right shoulder. The doctor, who was permitted to attend him, was a certain Nashid Effendi, who delayed a fortnight before diagnosing it as anthrax, and who, being ignorant of all modern surgical knowledge, did not even perform the necessary operation, alleging the age of the Pasha as a cause for this omission.

This infamous and unworthy conduct on the part of the doctor was, at first, explained in two ways: as he had only just left the School of Medicine, perhaps he had not sufficient experience, or perhaps he was acting under superior orders of those who were desirous of the death of the invalid. But what is certain is that Damad Mahmoud Pasha, companion in exile of Midhat, having no confidence either in the capacity or honesty of Nashid, and fearing lest he had some criminal design, sent a telegram to the Governor-General of Hedjaz, residing at Mecca—Osman Nouri Pasha, who is now Marshal and Aide-de-camp to Abdul Hamid—in which he implored him to send another doctor, accusing Nashid of incapacity. But Osman Nouri had not even the politeness to reply to him. However, fortunately the anthrax burst of itself, and it was always this same Nashid, accompanied by an officer, Captain

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Ibrahim Aga, who dressed the wound. The state of health of the invalid, which grew worse from day to day, was caused probably by the treatment to which he was submitted. It must be said that it is almost by a miracle that the wound healed eventually, thanks to a different but altogether rudimentary treatment, which was tried.

The doctor made a report to the Governor-General after each visit, and that official never failed to transmit it regularly by telegraph to Yildiz Kiosk.

One day Nashid, after dressing the wound with Ibrahim, suddenly asked Midhat Pasha, to the general consternation, if it were really true that in Europe criminals were now only executed by means of chloroform. This question, simple enough in itself, gave more than one person cause for reflection.

Major Bekir[1] of the Third Battalion, 10th Regiment, who was specially charged with the surveillance of the prisoners, had gone away some days previously to Mecca and Medina. It was with very great surprise, therefore, that we saw him enter Midhat Pasha's room with the doctor and Ibrahim. When asked the reason of his sudden return, Bekir replied simply, with extraordinary cunning, that it was only to arrange certain affairs of the garrison, in the first place, and secondly, to collect the taxes in the villages situated on the side of Tarié. He added that he was getting ready for this journey on the receipt of a special order from the *Muchir* (Marshal).

This was a bare-faced lie, and we shall see further on what was in reality the mission with which he was charged.

The sixth day after the arrival of Major Bekir was a Friday, and, as usual, the servants belonging to the

[1] Afterwards General of Division with title of Pasha, and transferred from Adrianople to Yemen.

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prisoners, accompanied by a guard, went to the mosque in the town for the Friday prayer. Arif Aga, servant to Midhat Pasha, remained by his suffering master.

On their return, Major Bekir stopped them all before the *caracol* or guard-room, and not seeing Arif Aga amongst them, had him at once sent for.

Arif refused to obey this order, alleging that he could not leave his invalid alone. When the Pashas perceived that Bekir insisted, they told the orderly to fetch him, in order that they might learn the reason of this inexplicable affair. Bekir, on receiving this communication, jumped up, and going to Midhat Pasha's room in the *kalé* (fortress), declared in a haughty, insulting manner that the servants would be dismissed from their service, that in future they would have to be contented to eat from *caravanas*, and that they would no longer be allowed to purchase eggs, cheese, nor olives, only tobacco; and last of all, that they would now be forbidden to present any further requests to the Sultan.

Such was the arrogant language employed by Bekir. Later on, changing his tone, he added with less impertinence that he was charged with a special mission, and that he had received an order to send Haïroullah Effendi's wife (who was living in the town with her baby) first of all to Mecca, and thence to Constantinople. This was most alarming news to many, for it all pointed to secret plots. However, there was no other course open than to await the end with resignation.

Damad Mahmoud Pasha, who was of a very hot-blooded disposition, and who easily got angry, lost patience, and replied to the explanations of Bekir by demanding that at least the dismissed attendants might be allowed to return to them in order to settle their accounts. Bekir, now become almost amiable, replied that this would be contrary to the orders he had received,

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but in order to do them a service, he would take the responsibility upon himself and allow the servants to come, accompanied by a guard.

The servants, after their accounts had been settled, were lodged in a room near the principal door of the barracks. The cooking utensils, pens, paper, and ink-stands, which until then had been placed at the disposition of the Pashas, were now taken from them. Bekir, in order to make the preparations for his travels, spent the night at the barracks.

Midhat Pasha had more than once filled the office of Grand Vizier, and had rendered eminent services to his country. The manner in which they treated him shocked me, for even under these circumstances, taking into consideration his age and the weak state of his health, they might have shown him some consideration.

A hospital attendant, a soldier, who was completely ignorant of the habits of the Pasha, was now appointed as his servant. Nevertheless, Midhat Pasha, we must allow, whilst we render homage to his energy, submitted to all these humiliations with the greatest calm, and even with indifference.

On the 8th of April, a Sunday, Bekir visited Midhat, undoubtedly with the intention, after some conversation, of taking the latest news to the Pasha at Hedjaz, for that same day he was going to leave for Mecca, taking with him the wife of Haïroullah, his child, the servants, and the cooks.

"Are you going now?" asked Midhat Pasha of Bekir.

"Yes, in a few hours," he replied; "if you have any communications to make me, will you kindly do so now?"

"Very well! Listen to me attentively. His Majesty, Abdul Hamid, has recently raised the Vali to the rank of Marshal, and I congratulate the latter with all my heart.

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You know, however, all the services that I have rendered my country; no one can deny them. You are not ignorant of the distinguished posts I have successively occupied. Now, you see how I am treated; I see nothing before me except the most gloomy prospect, and it is through you that they will get rid of me. You will be the instruments, and each of you, most probably, will be promoted; the officer will become colonel, the colonel will be gazetted as a general, and so on; but remember that you may die after Abdul Hamid. If you die before, your titles will be inscribed on your tombs; but if the contrary occurs, then I am convinced it will be quite otherwise. Pause now, examine your conscience, calculate your own moral and material interests, and without looking so far ahead, whilst His Majesty is still alive, just think for a moment what has become of the Chief President of that arbitrary tribunal which condemned me in so cowardly a manner, without any tangible proof. It is quite true that Sourouri Effendi was appointed *Cadi Asker;* but was he not exiled soon afterwards, under the title of Governor of Manissa. As to Djevdet Pasha, the second President, he is, as everyone knows, deprived of his functions, and is now at home—a disgraced man. Think of these events, and you will form a correct idea of the situation. I see that some crime is overhanging me. Remember the verse of the Koran which says: 'Whosoever kills shall be punished with hell and eternal tortures.' . . . We are all deserving of chastisement at the hands of Divine Justice. And now that you know my opinion, will you communicate it faithfully to the Vali?"

Bekir grew pale, but plucking up courage, replied: "I have been present at several battles; but, apart from war, I have never even cut off the head of a fowl." The conversation coming to an end, Bekir went out of the

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prisoner's room, and at once started on his journey to Mecca, accompanied by the individuals we have already mentioned.

On the seventh day after his departure—a Friday evening—we saw him return to Taïf. To the general surprise he reinstated the servants in the Pashas' service. After a few days Haïroullah's wife also returned from Djeddah with her baby and the cook. Haïroullah ordered his servant Ibrahim to look after his household in the town, and contented himself with the services of a common soldier.

The day after his return Bekir once more made his appearance in the Pashas' quarters, saying that a new Irade had just been telegraphed ordering a diminution of the prisoner's rations and the dismissal of the cooks. He also presented the greetings from the Vali, who would, nevertheless, allow them to purchase from the bazaar all that they needed.

Why this toleration? What did it mean, coming after the diminution of the rations and the dismissal of the cooks? Bekir replied to this maliciously, stating that such a duty was most unpleasing to him, but that as a soldier he was compelled to obey his superiors, although he regretted to be unable to act otherwise.

At this time, Midhat Pasha was fortunately almost entirely cured of his illness, but they still continued to telegraph daily the state of his health to the Governor-General.

One day Midhat Pasha sent his attendant to the town to buy some milk from a milkman named Echreff. Immediately on learning this, one of the officers, told off to guard the prisoners, a certain Nouri, wished to accompany the soldier to the milkman's house. On arriving at their destination, they asked for the milk. Echreff declared that he had only three *kilos* of milk, which had

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been ordered by the General, but that he would give them one *ock* at once if it were for the Pasha. Nouri accepted this offer, and ordered the soldier to take it to Daïra. This most unexpected and unusual amiability on the part of Nouri was noticed, and gave rise to suspicions.

During the Pasha's illness, it was Saïd Bey, another prisoner, who watched over the food prepared by Midhat's servant, Arif Aga. Saïd Bey at once took care to examine the can that contained this milk, and noticed to his surprise that the colour of it was unnatural. He tasted a small spoonful and found that the milk had a bitter flavour that hurt his throat. Saïd mentioned this fact to several people who were present, and especially to the lieutenant, Mehemet Aga, and they all tasted it—some of them even had to keep to their beds for several days afterwards, having been so imprudent as to take a sufficient quantity to upset their system.

When this was related to Midhat Pasha, he at once sent for Mehemet Aga, and with much self-restraint spoke to him as follows: "I sent to-day for some of the same milk as that ordered by the Binbashi (Major). It has been found to contain verdigris; this has been proved by all those who drank it; I believe that you also tasted it."

Mehemet acknowledged that the milk had been very much adulterated. Midhat, still preserving his *sang-froid*, continued: "Since this is the case, why do you not go to the Binbashi (Major) and warn him to be careful not to drink it."

The officer went away hurriedly, and soon after returned, saying: "That the Binbashi was going to send for the milkman, that he intended to investigate the matter, and that if it were deserved, a severe punishment would be inflicted. That he meant to get to the bottom of the whole business."

But we learned later on that before Mehemet went to

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inform the Binbashi, this latter was in the garden of the military hospital, surrounded by his confidants, whom he asked from time to time if all had gone off well! If the milk had been drunk, and if it had proved efficacious.

At the same time we were told that several soldiers who had drunk the Binbashi's milk had become ill. This, undoubtedly, was nothing but a rumour which had been purposely spread, and has never received confirmation from any trustworthy source.

A sample of this milk was sent to the Binbashi to be analysed by the doctors. The only reply he made was: "That they had not got the necessary apparatus for analysis!" This is absolutely incredible.

In order to save appearances, Bekir sent for Echreff, the milkman, and remonstrated with him. But Echreff, on his side, protested most vehemently. Besides which all his cans were in good condition. He insisted that the milk must have been contaminated by some medicament after it had left his dairy.

Thus the incident was closed, for the Binbashi did not follow up the affair, which he wished to be forgotten.

Another time a strange fact was again noticed. It was when Arif, Midhat's servant, was still in his service. He always passed his nights in the Pasha's room, having first of all locked up his own, in which he frequently kept the food he had prepared for the following day.

Arif perceived one morning that the lids of his saucepans had been disturbed, and that their contents presented an unusual appearance. He immediately told Midhat of his extraordinary discovery, and the Pasha sent at once for Damad Mahmoud and the other prisoners, begging them to examine the saucepans. After a summary examination they ascertained that some foreign matter had been introduced. The perpe-

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trator of this odious attempt remained as much unknown as he who had put the verdigris in the milk. The contents of all the saucepans were given to the dogs and cats, but as these animals were none the worse, we thought that this foreign matter could not have been a poison. However, after the assassination of Midhat Pasha we learned that the sub-lieutenants Mehemet and Nouri, getting in one night by the window, had managed to poison all those dishes of which Midhat Pasha would have partaken the following day. These two gentlemen made a complete confession of this crime some time afterwards.

During this time there was an honest soldier, Mehemet Yosgad, whose duty it was to prepare the coffee. We now know that it was suggested to him more than once that he should give poison to the prisoners, mixing it with their coffee. However, as this honourable man firmly refused to commit this crime, others had to be found who would undertake it.

Mahmoud Pasha, who was very fond of coffee, began to give up drinking it, and no longer smoked his *narghilé*, but in order to show his confidence in honest Mehemet, he never refused coffee that had been prepared by him.

Another time it was noticed that the water which was kept in a *baradé* had a most offensive smell. The jar was broken, and very great precautions were taken thenceforth.

Major Bekir was a thoroughly bad man, and extremely cunning. He took as many precautions about the crime he was about to commit as he did about his accomplices. So far all attempts at poisoning had failed; other means must be employed!

On the 9th of Redjeb, 1301 (23rd April 1883, O.S.), a Sunday, a detachment of cavalry, with two guns, arrived at Taïf, under the command of a Circassian colonel belonging to the 53rd regiment of the 7th Army Corps.

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Mehemet Lutfi at once chose out about forty of the strongest soldiers and increased the prisoners' guard.

Before the arrival of Mehemet Lutfi, Bekir had several times called Hadji Chukri Aga, Mahmoud Pasha's servant, into his own private room very late at night, when every one was asleep, and kept him there in trivial conversation; but he had never dared to confide the secret to him, nor to ask his help, for Chukri was not the kind of man to become his accomplice, or to commit a crime against his benefactor.

As has been stated above, the colonel reorganised the prisoners' guards after his own manner. The same day he sent for Arif Aga in order that he might have the incident of the milk explained to him, but in reality he proposed to Arif that he should poison his master.

"The poison is ready," he said, "and if you succeed in making Midhat drink it, you will receive very great rewards from His Majesty the Sultan. Another man has been commissioned to kill Damad Mahmoud, but if you are willing to undertake that as well, your recompense shall be doubled. If ever you divulge the secret you will be killed."

The promised reward amounted to £T1000 for the death of Midhat, and £T600 for that of Mahmoud.

Arif was a devoted and faithful servant, besides being a good Mussulman. He not only refused the rewards, but, disregarding all intimidations, protested strongly against the cowardly and unworthy schemes that they had formed against his master. He hastened also to relate to Midhat and to Mahmoud Pasha all that had been said to him.

These two Pashas, deeply moved by this communication, held a long consultation together, but to no purpose. What could they do? For a long time now they had

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foreseen very clearly that their end was approaching, if not by one way, then by another.

The colonel, who had not thought fit to pay them a visit, appeared very much preoccupied.

On the second night after his arrival he had the prisoners' quarters surrounded by numerous soldiers, and gave special orders to those who formed the inside guard. On Tuesday evening, he wished to end the whole affair, but circumstances obliged him to put off the execution until the following night. Ibrahim Aga, the captain, and three lieutenants sent for Arif Aga, and told him plainly that owing to a command received from the Palace of Yildiz Kiosk, they were obliged to put an end to Midhat, and that as Arif had refused to poison him, they hoped that at least he would have a little good sense and open the door of the Pasha's room about midnight; and that if he refused this little service they would know what steps to take.

Poor Arif Aga, maddened by hearing of the odious crime which was about to be committed against his beloved master, sprang up in rage and cried frantically to these wretches: "Oh no! I will never do what you suggest—I will never open the door! I will not be your accomplice! I am afraid of my conscience and of Allah!"

They were beginning to ill-treat him, but at that moment the prisoners happened to be going to their separate rooms. Midhat, who was on his way to his bedroom, was descending the stairs when he heard the voice of his faithful servant crying out over and over again: "Master, do not go down; return to your friends at once, and spend the night with them. These cowards are meaning to assassinate you!"

Midhat Pasha went up the stairs again, re-assembled the prisoners, and informed them of this sinister occur-

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rence. Just then one of the officers went to tell the colonel what had happened. He ordered that Arif should be arrested and the prisoners all separated. The faithful servant was dragged off to the barracks, where he was imprisoned, whilst an officer, Memiche, was sent by the colonel to separate the prisoners and to try and calm their fears.

"The colonel," said Memiche, "presents his compliments to you all, and begs that you will withdraw to your separate bedrooms, as the law requires." To this command Midhat and Mahmoud replied that they would only be separated by force. They sent for Ibrahim, who arrived somewhat troubled by the turn of affairs. They also requested to speak with Bekir, in order to obtain some explanation of this matter. The major arrived, and entering the room, said — "That good-for-nothing Arif doesn't know what he's talking about. It looks as if he were doing all this in order to get sent away, unless he is quite out of his mind." The Pashas could not succeed in hiding their anxiety, for everything foreboded the approaching crime.

"At the present moment," continued Bekir, "no such order exists. But we are soldiers, and therefore owe unquestioning obedience to our superiors. Be quite at ease! Do you think that anyone would be afraid of you whilst you are in our safe keeping?"

He then began to swear by all that he held most sacred in the world that there was no cause for them to fear. Meanwhile Arif Aga was being tortured for having divulged the secret.

Midhat passed the whole of that night with Ali Bey, another prisoner.

Colonel Mehemet Lutfi and Major Bekir remained in the room overlooking the principal entrance to the barracks, whence they directed the operations. The

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soldiers were given the same orders as on the preceding night, and cartridges were distributed amongst them.

A captain and three lieutenants were placed in the prisoners' quarters to superintend operations, and two soldiers, bare-footed for the occasion, and with bayonets fixed, were stationed at the door of each prisoner's room.

About six o'clock,[1] Hadji Chukri Aga, Mahmoud's servant was awakened and transferred to the barracks, where he was imprisoned.

Colonel Mehemet Lutfi remained in the barracks, whilst Major Bekir directed the assassination from the officers' room.[2]

We have stated above that Ali Bey was sharing

[1] About midnight European time.

[2] The following is a list of the officers and men who assassinated Midhat, 29th Redjeb, 1301 of the Hegira, or 12th May 1883.

Captain	. . .	Ibrahim . .	Circassian.
Non-Commissioned Officer		Lieutenant Nouri .	Native of Coumla.
Soldiers			
1st Company of Foot	. .	The Sergeant Ahmed	Native of Adremid.
1st ,,	. .	Coundirédji Ismail .	,, Yozgad.
2nd ,,	. .	Ahmed . . .	,, Kutahia.
2nd ,,	. .	Mehemet . .	,, Kutahia.
2nd ,,	. .	Rédjeb . . .	,, Kumuljina.
4th ,,	. .	Osman . . .	,, Kara Hissar.
2nd ,,	. .	Berber Ismail* .	,, Adrianople.

The following persons were commissioned to deal with Mahmoud Pasha.

Non-Commissioned Officer		Lieutenant Memiche	Native of Sparta.
Non-Commissioned Officer		Lieutenant Mehemet	,, Eudemiche.
Soldiers			
2nd Company of Foot	. .	The Sergeant Hassan	Native of Kutahia.
2nd ,,	. .	The Sergeant Suleiman	,, Kara Hissar.
4th ,,	. .	Corporal Mehemet	,, Antalia.
1st ,,	. .	Osman Baltadji .	,, Kara Hissar.
1st ,,	. .	Ahmed . . .	,, Tchoroum.
1st ,,	. .	Ali (Roumelian) .	,, Samanli-Kieui.
4th ,,	. .	Berber Mustapha .	,, Dimétoka.
4th ,,	. .	Ali . . .	,, Zile.

* These soldiers belong to the conscription of 1296 S.T. except the one who belongs to 1300 S.T

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Midhat's room. At about half-past six (1.30 A.M.) the door was forced open, and Ali Bey was dragged from the room. Then they strangled this old man, who was incapable of offering any resistance.

On bursting in the door of Mahmoud's room, they threw round his neck a soaped cord, which had been specially prepared, for they were aware that he possessed very considerable muscular strength. Mahmoud made a most desperate resistance, giving vent to piercing cries. They tried every means to hasten his death, with such ferocity that even the animals in the neighbourhood trembled at the sound of his heartrending cries for help. But soon the screams of anguish died away.

A few moments after, two corpses, wrapped in sheets, were transported to a room in the hospital. The perpetrators waited until the day broke before digging their graves in the cemetery, set apart for soldiers, which lies outside the fortifications. There these two martyrs repose in their eternal sleep.

Even the religious ceremonies were not carried out with regard to the funeral—doubtless, in order that the secret might be better preserved. They knew not that Time is the Revealer of all things!

. . . . . .

Midhat Pasha had recovered completely from his indisposition. One evening, a little while before his assassination, after a lengthy meditation, he had said to his friends: "I am thinking of death. The pain thereof only endures for five minutes. But I do not know what kind of death may be the least painful. Perhaps poison, or a bullet, or death at the end of some illness. My body, sixty year old, is worn out. Why live beyond this age if it be only to suffer! I should have been happy if my illness had carried me off. But what can I do? The hour has not struck yet. Several innocent people are prisoners here

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on my account, being obliged to mount guard over me; I should have liked to give them back their liberty."

Finishing these reflections, he once more returned to his sad and harrowing meditations.

. . . . . .

Immediately after the horrible execution, that same night, the doors and locks were all repaired, and two days later the belongings of the Pashas were taken into a room in the barracks. During two consecutive days several subordinates kept going in and out of this room, removing small objects.

Terror had reigned in the hearts of all the prisoners during the assassination. The following day the sentinels were removed, and when the prisoners went to make their morning prayer they embraced and took a last farewell of each other, bursting into tears and awaiting their turn with resignation. The reign of terror still continued, and every word and gesture gave rise to suspicion.

. . . . . .

Thus ends the faithful translation of the document sent by Haïroullah Effendi, ex-Sheik-ul-Islam. We have preserved all its originality.

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APPENDICES

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APPENDIX A

THE NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE BERLIN NOTE AND THE CONFERENCE OF CONSTANTINOPLE

THE effects of the Bulgarian troubles on British policy were clearly visible. England, that had hitherto been favourable and friendly to Turkey; that had counselled against the Consular Commission of August 1875; had adhered to the Andrassy note of December (1875) only at the express request of the Ottoman Government (on the 13th June 1876); had pressed reforms upon Turkey as a means of forestalling the designs of the enemies of the Ottoman Empire,[1] and had firmly refused to adhere to the Berlin Memorandum, now took up a slightly altered position. This nuance was clearly perceived in a despatch from Lord Derby to Sir H. Elliot of the 25th May 1876, in which he said: "In the course of conversation with Musurus Pasha, I took the opportunity of suggesting to His Excellency that it would be undesirable that the Turkish Government should misunderstand the attitude of Her Majesty's Government in regard to the proposals of the Berlin Conference. Her Majesty's Government had declined to join in proposals which they thought ill-advised, *but both the circumstances and the state of feeling in this country were very much changed since the Crimean War*, and the Porte would be unwise to be led, by recollections of that period, to count upon more than the moral support of Her Majesty's Government in the event of no satisfactory solution of the present difficulties being found."[2] It will be seen later on that even this attitude of benevolent diplomatic neutrality was not entirely preserved by the British Government at the Conference of Constantinople or the negotiations that led up to it.

"The three Northern and allied Powers" were evidently disconcerted by the turn matters were taking at Constantinople. It seemed impossible to present a comminatory note to a new Sultan and a new Government established by a revolution, the very purpose and aim of

[1] *Turkey*, 3, 1876, No. 422. [2] *Ibid.*, 3, 1877.

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which was to introduce practical reforms in the country, without a certain delay demanded by equity and even decency. They determined to make it as short as possible.

In spite, however, of strenuous efforts to conceal the fact, differences had arisen among "the allied Courts," or rather between the two principal parties interested. Russia was in favour of an occupation of the three disturbed provinces, with a view to the eventual establishment of autonomies on the model of Servia and Roumania. Austria was dead opposed to both propositions. There is no doubt that she had been working up to an occupation by her own troops of Bosnia and Herzegovina as the mandate of Europe—up to the time of the Bulgarian insurrection; but now that such an occupation would be accompanied by a Russian occupation of Bulgaria, she entirely changed her mind. If a joint occupation took place, the last state of those provinces would be worse than the first. At present she had the strategical advantage of position over Russia, but Russia in Bulgaria would have it over her. She was firmly opposed to joint occupation. Neither would autonomy suit her. The establishment of autonomous provinces, placed under the guarantee of the Great Powers, would make the absorption by herself of these coveted possessions impossible. Count Andrassy put his foot down against both these proposals.

A very active interchange of ideas consequently took place during the whole of the month of June between the two Empires, and it was here that the full value of a third partner, the disinterested broker, was revealed. Russia evidently meant business, for Servia, which was, as Consul-General White explained, absolutely in her hands, now (1st July 1876) formally declared war against Turkey, and invaded the Ottoman territory. Montenegro followed her example. In the latter case it was rather a superfluous or *ex post facto* formality.

A knot had occurred worthy of the interposition of the gods, and on the 8th July a meeting was arranged at Reichstadt between the Emperor Francis Joseph and the Czar. Of course it is only in Homeric times that accounts of the interviews of Olympic gods were vouchsafed to men, and simple mortals have to content themselves nowadays with being told the results of these interviews. The result of this particular interview was "very satisfactory." According to Sir A. Buchanan, "the Emperor and Count Andrassy returned last night (10th July 1876) *greatly satisfied* with the interview of Reichstadt." "The Emperors parted on the best terms; they agreed to maintain the present principle of non-intervention, reserving for the future the expediency of coming to an understanding with the Great Powers, according to circumstances which may arise."[1] So, according to this authority, the Emperor of Austria returned to Vienna "greatly satisfied" with doing nothing. It was scarcely worth

[1] *Turkey*, 3, 1876, Nos. 529 and 530.

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while going all the way to Reichstadt for that. It was, however, generally supposed in well-informed chancelleries in Europe at the time, and subsequent events greatly corroborated the surmise, that the Emperor had something else to be greatly satisfied about than what was vouchsafed to Sir A. Buchanan.

It was said that two specific points had been formally agreed upon between the rulers of these two military Empires, in presence of the threatening aspect that affairs were assuming. (1) That, should affairs in the East eventuate in war between Turkey and Russia, Russia would, under no circumstances, seek any territorial acquisition *in Europe*. (2) That Bosnia and Herzegovina should be considered within the exclusive sphere of Austria's influence, and that Russia would not actively oppose any arrangement with respect to them that Europe might propose. All the rest would be left to their respective chancellors, each would retain his liberty of action and pursue the policy he deemed the best, certain that nothing that could happen in the way of differences of opinion between them could bring about a rupture between the two Empires. The middle term of an agreement had evidently been found. "British interests" would pay the bill, and the desertion of Bucharest would be avenged.

By a curious coincidence, on the same day (8th July) that this historical interview took place, there appeared in the *Daily News* the famous "atrocity article" that set all England ablaze and started the greatest orator of the day on his crusade against the "unspeakable Turk."

The indirect effect on English policy of this crusade and the atrocity meetings all over England that followed it, was seen in the nuance already noticed, between the terms of the despatch of the 25th May and that of the 25th September, which was the prelude to the Conference where it was still further accentuated.

July was destined to bring an aggravation of trouble on the Turkish Empire and anxiety on Turkish Ministers. Austria chose this moment (1st July) to shut to Turkey the port of Klek, through which the Turkish army in Herzegovina received its chief supplies. It is not necessary to enter here into the question of international right involved in this matter. This turned on the interpretation of ancient treaties with the Venetian Republic, and on the boundaries of the "enclaves" in Dalmatia, and these questions had, by mutual consent, been left dormant for long years between the Austrian and Ottoman Governments. Suffice it to say that a *modus vivendi* had been arrived at between the two Governments in 1853 ("in the hope that an amicable arrangement will intervene relative to the question of the enclaves of Klek and Suttorina"), and had subsisted ever since. For Austria, after leaving the question of right in abeyance for twenty-three years, to choose that particular moment when the maximum of inconvenience would be thereby caused to the Ottoman Government, was a high-handed proceeding of the most unfriendly

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nature, and could only be justified on the principle of *la force prime le droit*. At any rate, it finally exploded the pretext of "her deep and earnest anxiety" for the pacification of these provinces which she was continually putting forward as the motives of her diplomatic actions, as well as all pretence of friendly dispositions towards the Porte. The energy displayed by the new Government at Constantinople in sending reinforcements to the scene of action, and the success attending these efforts, were perhaps the real motive of this unqualified act, for in consequence of that energy, things were not going well with the insurrection, and new factors would have to be imported to keep it going.

Accordingly, at the same time the port of supply for the Turkish troops was closed, Montenegro and Servia declared war on the Porte (1st July 1876). (As far as the first-named principality was concerned this formality was rather superfluous *ex post facto* formality.) Ever since the "intimate relations which had existed for two years back" between the Courts of Vienna and Cettinje, Montenegro had never ceased to carry on war against the Ottoman troops. Indeed her mountaineers, together with the Grenzers and Dalmatians, had been the mainstay of the "rebellion." Only as, nominally, peaceful relations had never been interrupted, the Turkish Commanders were debarred from following the rebels on Montenegrin soil, and Russia had drawn a taboo round Montenegro, and forbidden, under penalty of war, the invasion of that land, and Mr Jomine, the Russian diplomatic agent at Cettinje, was, with his Austrian colleague, the confidential adviser of the prince.

As far back as January 1876, Sir H. Elliot had informed Lord Derby of "the system employed by the Montenegrins in aid of the Herzegovinian insurgents. All the men (in Montenegro), capable of bearing arms, are considered to be soldiers, and are made into battalions of 600 men. The commanders and majors of these battalions, who are called commanders and pod-commanders, receive pay; the remaining officers and men are unpaid. When an expedition is contemplated, each man takes with him potatoes and bread, if he has any, for five days, and a reserve of provisions from each village is carried by women or baggage horses. The Austrian Committees, having provided surgeons and medicines, hospitals and ambulances have been organised in some villages on the frontier. The prince furnishes all those who join the insurgents *without authorisation, but he sends one-fifth of his effective forces into the Herzegovina. Not to overtire these poor people, His Highness takes care to change them at the end of each expedition, or when their provisions are exhausted. Reforms alone, it is stated, will never put an end to the insurrection, and force is of no avail so long as the insurgents and their Montenegrin friends have only to cross the frontier to be in safety.*"[1]

[1] *Turkey*, 3, 1876, No. 1.

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As for Servia, Consul-General White had for months past warned his Government of what was preparing, and of the wholesale influx of Russians into the Servian army, nor had Prince Milan made any disguise of the fact of the likelihood of his being drawn into the *mêlée*, but a certain almost comic jealousy existed between the rulers of these two little principalities, lest the one should steal a march on the other, and acquire a better right to the title of the "liberator of the Slav race."

They consequently agreed to declare war on Turkey together. As Servia, confident in her new levies, was now determined to act, Montenegro could not afford to be behindhand, however much it might have suited her to continue the particular mode of safe warfare that she had, for twelve months, been indulging in.

In spite of the new levies, military matters did not progress to Prince Milan's satisfaction. The fact was that a new spirit had been infused into Ottoman Councils by the new ministers, and large reinforcements of regular troops under competent generals had been hurried to the Servian frontiers and despatched into Bosnia. The consequence was that victory did not attend the Servian arms, and, after the loss of an important position near Deligrad on the 24th August 1876, barely two months after the pompous declaration of war, Prince Milan "with the approval of his ally, the Prince of Montenegro," requested the good offices of the Powers for a suspension of hostilities. All Europe eagerly seconded this request, and although a formal armistice was never concluded, a *de facto* suspension of hostilities took place. It is unnecessary to detail the negotiations that followed.

The Porte very naturally desired that an agreement on the basis of peace should precede or accompany an armistice, otherwise it would lose all the advantages of its present military position. Servia wanted an armistice without any basis of peace. When at last, in consequence of the insistence of Europe, the Porte agreed to this, a dispute arose about the duration of the armistice. The Porte proposed six months to give ample time to negotiate a permanent settlement, and England adhered to this view of the matter. Servia would have none of it; one month or nothing. She was moving on safe ground, for she knew well that Europe had taken the negotiations out of her hand and would never allow a renewed attack upon her. Russia strongly insisted on the shorter term, and when, in order to solve the difficulty, England appealed to the honest broker at Berlin, he proposed as a compromise an armistice of six weeks.

These *pourparlers* occupied about a month, and when they seemed to be on the point of being settled, as usual by the Porte yielding in the matter, it was found that Prince Milan had changed his mind, and would have no armistice at all.

What had occurred in the interval to account for this change of front?

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On the 24th September, Consul-General White writes to Sir Henry Elliot[1] "that the last six weeks have produced an important change in the affairs of Servia. The Civil Government has ceased to have a voice in public affairs; the presence of Russian officers, some of them officers of the Imperial Guard, the courage and enthusiasm with which they are animated, the growing influence of the Slavonic Committees through their agents, have all given a warlike tone to what is called public opinion here. . . . The Russians present here say openly that it is their aim and object to prevent the conclusions of peace." And again, on 4th October 1876, he writes to Lord Derby:[2] "It may be interesting for your Lordship to hear that money appears abundant in the Servian Exchequer, and although the Ministers deny that it is derived from Russian sources, it is quite impossible to account in any other way for its origin."

But something more particular must have occurred to encourage Prince Milan to order on the 26th September, the very next day on which the suspension of hostilities terminated, a general attack on the Turks in the Morava Valley. What was it? On the 28th September 1876, Mr Malet (afterwards Sir Edward Malet), writing from Rome to Lord Derby,[3] states that Sig. Melegari, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, in order to convince him "of the imminence of the danger to the Ottoman Empire" read the following paper to him, as coming from Livadia, adding that England alone was able to avert the execution of the design by "compelling" the Porte to acquiesce in His Lordship's demands. The paper was dated 26th September, and ran as follows: "The Emperor has sent General Soumarakoff to Vienna with instructions to propose a peace, should Turkey attempt to evade the armistice, upon conditions that would suit all the Powers, viz. Austrian military intervention in Bosnia, Russian military intervention in Bulgaria, and the joint entry of all the squadrons of the Levant into the Bosphorus. These steps appear to us indispensable in order to bring the Porte to its senses, to prevent war, and save the Christians from a general massacre."[4]

This *grandis epistola a Capreis* which frightened Mr Malet so much that he immediately telegraphed its substance to Lord Derby, and which was, no doubt, intended to frighten Lord Derby, had no chance at all of being accepted at Vienna, and if the constant and continuous intercourse between the three Northern "and allied Powers" was to any purpose at all, it is quite impossible that the nature of the reception it should meet with there, should have been ignored. It could therefore only have been intended as a "spur" to the Foreign Office, and it succeeded admirably in its intention.

It is scarcely worth while to waste many words over the proposal

[1] *Turkey*, 1, 1877, Incl. No. 554.
[2] *Ibid.*, No. 559.
[3] *Ibid.*, No. 452.
[4] *Ibid.*, Incl. No. 479.

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from Livadia. Austria feared nothing so much as a joint occupation with Russia. It would have been a guarantee exacted from her for her own eventual simultaneous retirement, which would have upset all her plans. Nor was England yet brought up to concert pitch. But the notice had served its purpose. England, a little timorously, and with the best intentions towards Turkey, and with the general approval and even applause of Europe,[1] had undertaken the lead in proposing terms to Turkey as a basis of pacification. As early as the 11th September Count Schouvaloff in an interview described "(1) The *status quo*, speaking roughly, both as regards Servia and Montenegro. (2) Administrative reforms in the nature of local autonomy for Bosnia and the Herzegovina. (3) Guarantees of some similar kinds (the exact details of which might be reserved for later discussion) against the future maladministration of Bulgaria."[2]

Ten days later, on the 21st September, Lord Derby, having in the meantime secured the agreement of the Austrian Government[3] to these proposals, these terms were forwarded to Sir H. Elliot for communication to the Porte. The second condition relating to Bosnia and Herzegovina was amplified by the important stipulation "that the Porte should undertake, *in a Protocol to be signed at Constantinople with the Representatives of the mediatory Powers*, to grant, etc."[4]

Sir H. Elliot, in obedience to positive instructions, went to the utmost limit of friendly pressure[5] to induce the Porte to accept these conditions. The Porte, on its side, showed the greatest possible desire to meet the wishes of the English Ambassador.[6] The term "local autonomy," and still more the form of a Protocol demanded, were the two most serious obstacles to an understanding. So great was Sir H. Elliot's influence on the Turkish Minister, and so great was their confidence in England's loyalty, that an understanding was almost arrived at when the news of General Soumarakoff's Mission reached the Porte. On the 4th October, the new Turkish Government telegraphed to the Ottoman Ambassador in London an indignant protest against the proposals of which that envoy was the bearer, and concluded by saying: "If the Sublime Porte has, though challenged (by Servia), not made use of her victory, she will never forget that she is still an independent State, and that she owes it to herself to choose an honourable death rather than the dismemberment and partition of her States."[7]

This incident did not facilitate Sir H. Elliot's task. On the day following the 5th October, Lord Derby instructs Sir H. Elliot to inform the Porte that it is intended that the armistice should be

[1] *Turkey*, 1, 1877, No. 452.
[2] *Ibid.*, No. 197.
[3] *Ibid.*, 1, 1877, No. 325.
[4] *Ibid.*, No. 324.
[5] *Ibid.*, 1, 1877, No. 564.
[6] *Ibid.*, Nos. 470 and 498.
[7] *Ibid.*, No. 508.

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followed by a Conference, and that if an armistice for not less than a month is not granted, the Ambassador was to quit Constantinople and leave Turkey to its fate.[1]

On the 8th October, the Porte asks the very pertinent question whether, in the event of the conditions being accepted, a Conference would still be proposed.[2] No answer seems ever to have been given to this important question.

The Turkish Ministers now submitted the question of the armistice to a Grand Council, which acceded to it for five months.[3] On the 13th October, in a long telegram to Musurus Pasha, the Porte makes a last despairing attempt to stay the decision for a Conference, which it says "will at least give rise to the danger of certain impulses on which head we have the right to be anxious, and which in reality would be of no use. The five months' armistice would leave ample time for the Powers to exchange explanations and observations without any Conference. During this time, the work of internal reform would go on, and Europe would have the opportunity of being edified as to the serious and practical character of the promises of the Imperial Government," and concluded by saying, referring evidently to the negotiations with Sir H. Elliot, "I hope His Lordship will agree with us in preventing the question, *which was just beginning to look brighter*, thanks to so many sacrifices and efforts, from being turned into a path of new difficulties and perils."[4]

If it had not been for the Soumarakoff Mission, and the scare it created in the Foreign Office, it would have been an inexplicable mystery why Lord Derby, abandoning negotiations carried on by Sir H. Elliot, which "were just beginning to look brighter," should have hurriedly fathered this proposal of a Conference. If the Soumarakoff Mission was only intended to secure this point, it was most eminently successful. Anyway, from this time forth, Lord Derby stuck grimly to a Conference. Without a Conference there was no salvation. The question, however, of the duration of the armistice was not yet settled, and as England, having accepted six months, could not recant, General Ignatieff arrived from Livadia to settle it.

But here an incident occurred of a too charmingly amusing character to be passed over in silence. *La note comique* is never entirely absent from these negotiations. Lord Adolphus Loftus, Her Britannic Majesty's Ambassador at St Petersburg, received leave in the middle of October to go to the Crimea, whither the Russian Court had removed, and where Prince Gortchakoff, the Chancellor, was staying, in order to be nearer the official source of diplomatic information. On Friday, the 27th, accordingly, he arrived at Yalta, accompanied by Mr Egerton of his Embassy. On Sunday, the 29th, he had an interview at Orianda with Prince Gortchakoff, "who re-

[1] *Turkey*, 1, 1877, No. 516.
[2] *Ibid.*, No. 540.
[3] *Ibid.*, 1, 1877, No. 584.
[4] *Ibid.*, 1, 1877, No. 612.

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ceived him very cordially, and after some friendly remarks, the conversation turned to Constantinople." After stating that the state of affairs there was grave, the Chancellor expressed "a hope that the question of the armistice was arranged, the Porte having, on the advice of Sir H. Elliot, yielded to the considerations in favour of the shorter term." His Highness further stated "that General Ignatieff had been instructed to be yielding and conciliatory on the subject of the armistice."

Two days after this, *i.e.* on Tuesday, the 31st October, Lord A. Loftus "met" Prince Gortchakoff, who, in answer to the question whether there was any news from Constantinople, replied that there was, but "that he preferred that the Emperor should communicate it." Lord A. Loftus's audience with the Czar had been arranged for the next day, 1st November, but was subsequently postponed till the 2nd. Between the accidental meeting with the Chancellor and this audience, Lord A. Loftus received the *Journal de St Petersbourg* of the 31st October, in which he read that General Ignatieff had presented that day an ultimatum to the Porte to conclude an armistice with Servia, and had required an answer within forty-eight hours. So that the English Ambassador, having traversed the whole length of Europe in a four days' journey with a secretary of his Embassy attached to him, in order to be near the fountain of official information, would have received the news two days sooner if he had stayed at home!

We will let Lord A. Loftus describe his audience on the 2nd at Livadia, himself:—"I had an audience with the Emperor of Russia to-day at Livadia, when His Majesty was pleased to receive me with his customary kindness and cordiality (*sic*). After some gracious enquiries after my family, His Majesty at once opened on the Eastern question. His Majesty stated that he had that morning received a telegram from Constantinople announcing the probable acceptance of the armistice, and he read to me another telegram reporting that orders had been already sent by the Porte to their commanders to suspend military operations. This, His Majesty observed, was very satisfactory. On my observing on the *sudden change which had taken place between the Sunday when I had seen the Chancellor and the following day when the ultimatum was despatched*, His Majesty said that this had been caused by the intelligence he had received of the complete discomfiture of the Servian army, and his fear that it might be followed by similar atrocities to those which had occurred in Bulgaria. . . ."[1]

It would indeed be a pity to spoil the uniqueness of this *tableau* by any superfluous commentary, but a despatch from Sir H. Elliot at Constantinople, dated on the same day as this audience (2nd November), throws some further light on this already luminous

[1] *Turkey*, 1, 1877, No. 952.

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incident. "In the course of conversation this morning with General Ignatieff, I remarked that I understood that he had returned from Livadia with instructions to present his ultimatum. He answered *that he had brought it with him* with a discretionary authority to withhold it if he thought desirable. *This is a rather different version* from that which he had previously given to my colleagues and myself, when he told us on Tuesday (31st October) that he *had received the ultimatum two days before*, and that he had taken on himself the responsibility of withholding it, but had now imperative orders to execute his instructions. It is impossible to doubt that he had kept his Government fully informed of the progress of his negotiations with the Porte, or that they were perfectly well aware that his own proposals had been accepted with very trifling modifications, upon which an understanding could very easily be arrived at. It is evident enough that the sudden sending in of the ultimatum was decided upon in the hope that by an immediate cessation of hostilities, and the acceptance of an armistice, the fall of Alexinatz would be averted. The capture of the Servian positions at Junis made it certain that "the occupation of Alexinatz and Deligrad would soon follow, and the only hope of saving the Servians and the Russian Auxiliary troops from this mortification lay in the chance of stopping the Turks before they had time to reap the fruits of their success."[1]

But, independently of the object lesson in veracity that this narrative inculcates, it gives the measure of the value attached by the Emperor of Russia to the European concert, and the degree to which it was likely to hamper his own liberty of action whenever he thought proper to liberate himself from it. The *procédé* with regard to the British Ambassador only concerns the British Government.

The Porte had yielded to the ultimatum.

In the meantime negotiations for assembling a Conference continued. The Czar had expressed to the English Ambassador "a very earnest wish that the Conference should meet with the *least possible delay*, and that instructions should even be immediately sent by the several Governments to enable the Ambassadors at Constantinople to deliberate *at once* on the necessary preliminaries of peace."[2] Prince Gortchakoff, too, *expressed his anxious wish* that on the arrangement of the armistice *no time should be lost* in organising a Conference.[3]

But Austria was coy. The term "local autonomy" accompanied by no matter what gloss, seriously perturbed her; and yet this was the very point on which Russia insisted the most. In reporting his conversation with Prince Gortchakoff at Orianda, Lord A. Loftus said: "It is evident to me that Prince Gortchakoff does not wish to make the question of the armistice the ground for a rupture with the Porte, and that he *looks to the question of the 'autonomy of the three Provinces' as being the important deciding point of peace or war*."[4]

[1] *Turkey*, 1, 1877, No. 986.
[2] *Ibid.*, No. 952.
[3] *Ibid.*, No. 950.
[4] *Ibid.*, No. 950.

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Until Count Andrassy received guarantees that no kind of *political* autonomy was meant, he would have nothing to do with a Conference, and it was only when, after a good deal of fencing, this guarantee was at last accorded him, that he gave his consent to the proposal.

Although there had been a serious proposal to exclude Turkey from the Conference to be held in her own capital to decide on the administration of her provinces, the cynical incongruity of the proposition had procured its rejection, and now the Porte was asked to adhere to it. Without any illusion, since Russia's ultimatum, as to whither the Conference would lead, the Porte, on the 18th November, with the sanction of a Grand Council, gave her assent to a proposal, the rejection of which would have meant immediate war.

In the course of the six months that intervened between the 13th of May (date of the Berlin Note) and the meeting of the Conference in December, an apparent contradiction seems to manifest itself between the "intimate alliance" of the three Northern Powers (which for the purpose of these negotiations means between Austria and Russia), and the frictions and disagreements between their respective Governments. On no less than five points did this disagreement manifest itself: (1) as to whether Turkey should be coerced into an armistice, pure and simple, with Servia, or whether a basis of peace should, at the same time as the armistice, be proposed;[1] (2) as to inculcating prudence of conduct on Servia;[2] (3) as to the joint occupation with Russia of the Turkish provinces;[3] (4) as to the "autonomy" of the revolted provinces;[4] (5) on the question of the Conference.[5]

On the other hand, we have seen Count Beust calling at the Foreign Office to assure Lord Derby that never was the alliance of the three Northern Powers so "intimate"; we have the meeting of Reichstadt, and General Soumarakoff delivering an autograph letter from the Czar to the Emperor of Austria, and we have a very mysterious communication from Lord A. Loftus on the 15th August 1876, in which he says: "In speaking of Austria, Prince Gortchakoff again repeated to me that he had fully discussed the question of a pacification with Count Andrassy, and *that they were entirely agreed on all points and for all eventualities*. 'I can state no more,' said the Chancellor, 'but that much I can tell you, as I have done to your Colleagues; and I can add that our Ambassadors at the other Courts know no more than you do.' This language," continues Lord A. Loftus, "though, perhaps, satisfactory . . . is mysterious, and we can only unravel the mystery by conjectures."[6]

[1] *Turkey*, 1, 1877, Nos. 166 and 239.

[2] *Ibid.*, 3, 1876, No. 23.

[3] *Ibid.*, 1, No. 544.

[4] *Ibid.*, 3, 1876, Nos. 459 and 517: and *Turkey*, 1, 1877, Nos. 551 and 898; and *Turkey*, 2, 1877, No. 27.

[5] *Ibid.*, 1, 1877, Nos. 528, 541, 551, and 552.

[6] *Ibid.*, 1, 1877, No. 52.

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Perhaps the mystery, as Lord A. Loftus calls it, is not so mysterious after all. A reference to what took place in another diplomatic discussion in 1859 will help to unravel it without the aid of much conjecture. In that year Mr Disraeli startled the House of Commons by informing it, on the faith of information on which he relied, that there was a secret treaty between Italy and France for the cession to the latter Power of the provinces of Savoy and Nice. Lord Palmerston denied the existence of any such treaty, and twitted Mr Disraeli with having discovered a mare's nest. When Mr Disraeli's information was proved to be substantially correct, Lord Palmerston explained that there had been no treaty but a mere *pacte de famille* agreed upon on the occasion of the marriage of the Princess Clotilde to Prince Jerome Napoleon. The mystery that puzzled Lord A. Loftus is easily unravelled. There was undoubtedly a distinct and specific understanding between the two Emperors; but none between their Governments; so that Lord Derby could, on the 20th October, write to Sir A. Buchanan that "The Austro-Hungarian Ambassador called upon me to-day, and informed me, by order of his Government, that the reports which have been recently, and are still, current as to the existence of a secret understanding *between the Austrian and Russian Governments* are absolutely unfounded."[1] In countries and ages where the letter of a declaration is considered more important than its spirit, such hair-splitting distinctions may pass current. At any rate, they serve their purpose.

[1] *Turkey*, 1, 1877, No. 7:8.

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APPENDIX B

THE INSURRECTION OF HERZEGOVINA AND BOSNIA, AND THE BERLIN NOTE

ON the 2nd July 1875, Consul Holmes, writing to Lord Derby from Bosna-Serai, says:[1] "I have the honour to report to your Lordship that there is disturbance in the Herzegovina. Early last winter some 164 of the inhabitants of the district of Nevesinje left their homes and went into Montenegro. After remaining there some months, however, they petitioned the Porte to be allowed to return to Nevesinje. The Governor-General advised the Porte to reply, that, as they had chosen to leave their country for Montenegro, they might remain there. The Government, however, decided to grant their request, and allowed them to return. Shortly afterwards they appeared in revolt, declared that they were oppressed, refusing to pay their taxes or admit the police amongst them, and they have been endeavouring by intimidation to cause their neighbours in the surrounding districts to join them. The Mutesarif of Mostar invited them to come to that place to state their grievances, which he assured them would be redressed, but they refused, and the Governor-General tells me that they cut to pieces a man quite unconnected with them, who had gone to Mostar to seek redress for some grievance, and threatened with the same fate any within their reach who should do so in future. The Governor-General informs me that at present he has no intention of sending troops against them, but will prevent their efforts to extend their revolt by surrounding those districts with policemen, and he will probably send some of the notables of Serajevo to endeavour to bring them to reason."

In a subsequent despatch dated a week later, Consul Holmes adds that "Haidar Bey and Petrarchi Effendi, two notables of Serajevo, were sent to communicate with the rebels, but before they reached Nevesinje they found that the rebels had forced and persuaded many others to join them, and had attacked and captured a caravan of twenty-five horses on the road from Mostar to Nevesini, belonging to some merchants of Serajevo, laden with rice, sugar, and coffee, which they carried off to the village of Odrichnia. At the same time, they murdered and decapitated five Turkish travellers, named Salih, Hassosunovich, Marich, Sarnich, Ali of Nevesinje, and another whose

[1] Blue Book, *Turkey* 2, 1876, No. 1.

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name is not yet known, a native of Erassni. One of the insurgents, named Tschoubate, at the head of some three hundred followers, drove away forty Zaptiés placed in the defile of Stolatz, and, separating into small bands, have, for the moment, interrupted the various roads in the neighbourhood. One band is stationed out at the bridge over the Krappa, and renders the road between Mostar and Meteorich unsafe. The detached bands of insurgents are endeavouring to force others to join them by burning the houses of those who refuse to do so, and by other means of intimidation. The Governor-General has received telegrams from Mostar signed by the two Commissioners and the Mutesarif and Commander of the troops at Mostar, stating these facts; also that the headless bodies of the Turks have been recovered and burnt. Under these circumstances, the Commissioners hesitated to continue their journey; and the authorities at Mostar state that great excitement prevails throughout the Mussulman population, who are impatient to attack the insurgents and avenge the savage murders of their co-religionists, whose decapitation has particularly roused their feelings, and requesting five battalions to keep order."[1]

The methods adopted by the insurgents were the same as those adopted in Bulgaria, and wherever an organised attempt at insurrection was made in the Ottoman provinces by agents *provocateurs* and foreign bands with a view to provoke the Mussulmans to deeds of retaliation which would be exploited by the Committees and excite indignation in the world. It will be remembered that when Midhat Pasha was Governor of the Danubian vilayet (p. 43), the band that crossed into Bulgaria from Sistovo began by massacring five Mussulman children between the ages of eight and twelve. When the Consuls, sent on a peace message to the insurgents visited Nevesinje, they "found all the Eastern part of the town towards the plain and all the bazaar, burnt and in ruins. Dead bodies were lying in various corners unburied; and we noticed the head of a boy in one of the streets blackening in the sun. A little Turkish girl was brought to us, wounded in the throat, and we were told that an insurgent was on the point of cutting off her head when she was snatched from him by one less bloodthirsty, and allowed to escape."[2]

Another aim of the insurgents was to force an emigration *en masse* into Austrian territory by promises that they should be well fed and cared for by the Austrian authorities until favourable conditions were secured for them. Montenegro, too, was let loose on Turkey and well supplied with the sinews of war. It was determined at Vienna that no time should be lost in "putting their pin in the game," and in taking the lead in negotiations that must necessarily precede an occupation. The principle of interference once admitted, all the rest would follow in due course. On the

[1] Blue Book, No. 2.

[2] *Ibid.*, No. 32.

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24th August 1875, Lord Derby writes to Sir H. Elliot that: "Her Majesty's Government have had under their consideration you telegraphic despatch of the 20th inst., in which you report that a proposal, *concerted at Vienna by the three Northern Powers*, had been made to the Porte by their Ambassadors. Your Excellency states that they propose that Consuls should be delegated by the Embassies to proceed to the scene of the insurrection and inform the insurgents that they must expect no support or countenance from their Governments. They are also to advise the insurgents to desist from hostilities, but to make known their complaints to a Commission. . . . The proposal is favourably received by the Porte, and the Grand Vizier (Mahmoud Nedim) had just been to beg you not to stand aloof. . . . Her Majesty's Government consent to this step with reluctance, *as they doubt the expediency of the intervention of foreign consuls. Such an intervention is scarcely compatible with the independent authority of the Porte over its own territory, offers an inducement to an insurrection as a means of appealing to foreign sympathy against Turkish rule, and may, not improbably, open the way to further diplomatic interference in the internal affairs of the Empire.*"[1] Prophetic words on the part of Lord Derby. Of course the consular farce came to nothing. The rebels would not even meet the Consuls. Facts were more eloquent than words, and they had their cues from the Committees. Now was the time, if the Powers had been in earnest, to shut the Dalmatian frontier to the rebels, as they had undertaken to do. We shall see how Austria fulfilled this part of the bargain. Instead of occupying themselves in the slightest degree with this part of the business, they immediately set about concocting another diplomatic move.

On 11th December 1875, the Austrian Ambassador, Count Beust, called on Lord Derby, and said that "The Turkish Ministers had hitherto directed their energies exclusively to the task of preventing anything which could be construed into an interference of any kind with the internal affairs of Turkey. This standpoint, however respectable it may be, has the disadvantage the Austro-Hungarian Government considered, of prolonging a regrettable state of things, and therefore of aggravating the danger. *Negotiations respecting the affairs of the East are now being carried on between Vienna and St Petersburg*, the result of which will be communicated as soon as an agreement has been arrived at, to Her Majesty's Government, not in the light of an accomplished fact, but for their consideration, and for them to state their own opinions on the propositions agreed upon."[2]

On the 3rd January 1876, Lord Derby received from Count Beust a copy of the famous despatch, which goes by the name of the Andrassy Memorandum, of the 30th December 1875, which, after

[1] *Turkey*, 2, 1876, No. 16.

[2] *Ibid.*, No. 47.

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stating that the three Courts of Austria-Hungary, Russia, and Germany, after exchanging their views on this subject, "have united for the purpose of employing in common their efforts for pacification, and this object appeared too much in conformity with the general wish for them to doubt that *the other Cabinets when invited to associate themselves in the movement*, through their representatives at Constantinople, would hasten to join their efforts to ours," proceeded to recommend to the Porte the following five points :—

(1) Full and entire religious liberty.
(2) Abolition of the system of farming the taxes.
(3) A law guaranteeing the produce of direct taxes being employed in the interest of the provinces.
(4) The institution of a special commission composed of an equal number of Christians and Mussulmans, to control the execution of the reforms.
(5) The improvement of the position of the rural population.

And in submitting these proposals to the English Minister, Count Beust added that "they were not regarded by his Government in the light of mere good advice. *They wanted a pledge* that the reforms that they recommended should be carried into execution, failing which, they would not undertake to use their influence with the Christian population to advise them to lay down their arms."[1] And in another interview, the next day, he spoke again of an "explicit engagement" from the Porte, adding that "there could be no doubt that the postponement of the pacifying influences of the Powers *even by single days* might in the present state of affairs be fraught with incalculable danger."[2] The Austrian Government, however, repudiated any idea "of armed intervention, and stated that it had no desire to constitute itself guardians of the peace beyond its own frontiers," and that if the Porte accepted, and the insurgents did not submit, "then the Porte would be left to subdue them by force of arms, and that they (the insurgents) would be prevented from obtaining the support derived by them from exterior aid."[3]

This was six months after the so-called insurrection had broken out, and had been all the time "obtaining continuous support from exterior aid," and three months after the Consular Commission, which had been obtained from the Porte by a formal promise to shut the frontier to the rebels if they refused the advice of the Consuls. Lord Derby, after distinctly stating that he would be no party to any pressure being brought to bear on the Porte to carry out these reforms, and having ascertained that the Turkish Government desired England's adhesion to the Note, consented to support it at Constantinople.

In connection with this famous Memorandum, it is interesting to note an interpolation that took place in the Hungarian Diet on

[1] *Turkey*, 2, 1876, No. 70. [2] *Ibid.*, No. 71. [3] *Ibid.*, No. 63.

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11th March with respect to it. In answer to Deputy Pollit, Mr Tisza, the Minister President, stated "in the answer to the question as to whether the Hungarian Government approves of the intervention, *there is no question of intervention, but only of good advice*, which had been given in concert with the European Powers, and which had been accepted in the most friendly manner by the Porte. . . . In answer to the question as to the action of Hungary if the pacification was not effected, and if Servia intervened, *such an eventuality was most improbable* . . . . but in that case the policy of the Empire would be guided by the interests of Europe. . . . With reference to the question of the refugees, the Empire had not disregarded the interests of humanity . . . . as was shown by the subvention amounting to nearly 1,000,000 florins which had been already given to them. . . . The speaker concluded by expressing a hope that the House would accept his explanation." If they did, they were easily satisfied, these Hungarian Deputies. Not a word about the capital question of shutting the frontier to the rebels. Servia, too, was arming to the teeth, and was to declare war on Turkey three months later.

We shall see the literal fulfilment of this prediction. Bosnia was the first to follow suit with the Herzegovina. On the 8th February 1876, Sir H. Elliot writes to Lord Derby: "The Porte is much disturbed by the unsatisfactory account received from the Governor-General of Bosnia, who has applied for fresh troops. *Bands supposed to consist of old Grenzers are stated to have passed the Save from Austria at four different points, but have been repulsed. The body which invaded Bosnia is stated to have consisted of* 400 *or* 500 *men all well-armed.* Much excitement is said to prevail on both sides of the Servian frontier, and apprehensions are entertained of an aggression from that quarter. Reschid Pasha tells me that Count Zichy has given him, on the part of Count Andrassy, the strongest assurance . . . that measures shall be adopted to prevent the recurrence of such acts, and has promised . . . that those who have taken part in them shall be disarmed and *internés*."[1]

It would be difficult to carry intentional bad faith further. All this time, notes and memorandums were flying about the Chancelleries of Europe to force the Porte to give guarantees for suppressing an insurrection which was being organised and fed by bands "all well-armed" across a friendly frontier, its suppression being thus rendered materially impossible. As well might one try to extinguish a conflagration, over an unlimited area, that was being continually fed by petroleum springs, the sources of which could not be got at. Nor let it be supposed that to guard such a line of frontier was impossible. The rebels had it all their own way. And so had the Diplomatists of the "Allied Courts of Berlin, Vienna, and St Petersburg." Russian Committees were joining their efforts to Austrian

[1] *Turkey*, 3, No. 6.

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On the 14th February 1876, Sir H. Elliot writes to Lord Derby: "The accounts of the encouragement given to the insurgents at Ragusa greatly exceeds all that I was prepared for. The Russian Consulate is the open resort of the insurgent chiefs; their correspondence is sent to the Consul, who is a party to all their projects, and associates himself intimately with them. He does not appear to make any attempt to conceal the part he is playing, for on the occasion of the death of the chief Maxima, in one of the late encounters, the Russian flag at the Consulate was hoisted at half-mast, and M. Jomini himself joined the funeral procession.

"Some of the wounded when asked why they continue the struggle when the Porte is ready to grant all their demands, have answered plainly that they are bound to go on as long as they are told by Russia to do so. The assurances given at St Petersburg of the wish of the Imperial Government that the insurgents would lay down their arms, must naturally go for nothing as long as its official Representative, with whom they are in communication, encourages them to go on."[1] Pretty plain speaking this! and Austria that continued the "exequatur" to a foreign Consul, acting thus on its territory towards a friendly Power. So gross and palpable was this assistance given by Austria to the insurgents, whilst pretending all the time to be so keenly anxious for its suppression, that Lord Derby thought it necessary on the 10th March 1876, to give the following instructions to Sir A. Buchanan, the English Ambassador at Vienna: "I have to inform Your Excellency that it has come to the knowledge of Her Majesty's Government, through Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, that the Porte had received information that a severe fight took place on the Dalmatian frontier on the 4th inst., and that on the following day, the combat was renewed by a force said to be 700 *strong, who came from Austrian territory with large supplies of ammunition, and that this having occurred so immediately after the assurances of the Austro-Hungarian Government that their frontier would be officially guarded*, has caused great discouragement to the Turkish Government, and it is feared that the effect of it in Montenegro will be very mischievous, and I have therefore to request Your Excellency to call the serious attention of the Imperial Government to this matter."[2] But these remonstrances, which were evidently sincere and well-meaning, had not the very slightest effect at Vienna. The Hungarian Chancellor was always ready to give any amount of assurances and promises to the credulous Sir A. Buchanan. On the 3rd April 1876, Sir H. Elliot was obliged to write again: "I learn that the Porte has received information of the passage of considerable bands *said to be accompanied by two pieces of artillery* from Dalmatia and Croatia, into the north-western district of Bosnia."[3] And further, on the next day, 4th April,

[1] *Turkey*, 3, 1876, No. 11. [2] *Ibid.*, 3, 1876, No. 44.
[3] *Ibid.*, 3, 1876, No. 121.

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he writes: "A telegram from the Governor-General of Bosnia, which has been read to me by Reschid Pasha, gives a very alarming account of the state of things in that province. *Armed bands are passing freely from the Austrian territory*, and there are symptoms indicating a probable insurrection of the populations along the rivers Save and Una. The Governor-General states that he has been unable to re-establish the line of telegraph along the Save, *as the workmen are continually fired at from the Austrian bank of the river, and his remonstrances addressed to the Austrian authorities have been unattended to.*"[1] The reason why Austria was not content to confine her operations to Herzegovina, but had extended them to Bosnia, was clear. The Porte was succeeding, in spite of all difficulties, in pacifying the former, and as the Berlin note was being drawn up at Berlin for the three "Allied Powers" and would be presented in a month, such a precipitation would derange all their plans.

The following despatch of Sir H. Elliot of 7th April 1876 clearly indicates this state of things. "The enclosed report from Mr Sandison of the account received at the Porte from Haidar Effendi (the Turkish Commissioner) gives a very serious aspect to the state of affairs in Bosnia. It is evident that the Austro-Hungarian Government *have failed lamentably in their engagement to guard their own frontier, and by means of well-armed bands coming from their territory, a formidable insurrection has been excited in districts which have hitherto remained quiet. Although the news received from the Herzegovina is good, and gave hopes of a pacification*, it would be too much to expect that the movement in Bosnia should not produce its effect in the districts which have been so long in insurrection."[2]

In the month of May we arrived at another stage of the business. It is time that diplomacy should register another point of "terrain acquis." On the 4th May 1876 Lord Derby, writing to Sir A. Buchanan, says: "The Austrian Ambassador called upon me this afternoon and placed in my hands for perusal a despatch which he had received from his Government. The purport of the despatch was to state that there is *an entire agreement between the Governments of Austria, Germany and Russia as to affairs in the East*, and that any reports that may have been circulated to the contrary are simple inventions."[3]

The purport of making this communication could be no other than a warning to all whom it may concern, that they could join or not join the "European Concert," as they thought proper. It would make no difference to the European Concert. It was a notice certainly calculated to open the eyes, even of the blind, to what was going on.

As the fact of armed bands could not be disputed, it was obviously the interest of Austria to endeavour to throw the blame on others Montenegro and Servia especially. We shall come to these little

[1] *Turkey*, 3, 1876, No. 128. [2] *Ibid.*, 3, 1876, No. 130.
[3] *Ibid.*, 3, 1876, No. 195.

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States later, but *à propos* of shifting the blame on Servia, there is a very significant despatch from Consul-General White, dated Belgrade, 28th April 1876. "The Prince (of Servia) takes no pains to conceal that, more than ever, he considers a collision with the Porte as within the range of possibilities; but he continues to disclaim at the same time any intention to act as the aggressor. He pointed out to me the other day that the portion of Bosnia which is conterminous to Servia has been entirely free from armed bands since last November, when the Papas Zarko was repulsed into Servia, *whilst the insurgents who had within the last few weeks made their appearance on the river Unna between Bihatch, Novi and Kostainitza, were all in proximity to the Austrian frontier*, and he defied anyone to show that Servia had been instrumental in fostering insurrection in that department of Bosnia, though he added that such an accusation had been made somewhere, evidently alluding to Austrian Authorities."[1] The explanation of these apparent mysteries was really simple enough. Servia was reserving herself for Bulgaria, which was within the sphere of her action, as she herself was within the orbit of Russia's influence, and she had no intention of playing Austria's game for Austria's sole benefit.

Unless strongly backed by Russia, Servia knew well enough that Austria, posted in the conterminous province of Bosnia, would be a most awkward neighbour, and render any hope of future independence on her part purely illusory. Turkey's yoke would be light indeed in comparison to that of Austria, if she were surrounded on three sides by the Kaiserlich. A great deal of the apparent contradiction, see-sawing and hesitation of this period is to be accounted for by these conflicting inner currents, set in motion by two of the three allied Governments, whose agreement Count Beust was instructed to inform Lord Derby was "entire." It was entire as regarded Turkey, there was no doubt about that, but there was a very pretty little by-play going on besides, within the circle of the larger drama. No wonder this state of things created a situation, as Consul Holmes pithily described it, "in which everyone seems to profess precisely what he fails to practise."

BERLIN NOTE.

Whatever light friction there may have been between Russia and Austria in the Spring of 1876, it seems to have been smoothed over, probably by the intervention of the third disinterested partner in the Alliance; for on Saturday, the 13th May 1876, Lord Odo Russell, the British Ambassador at Berlin, received an invitation from Prince Bismarck to call on him that day in order to meet Count Andrassy and Prince Gortchakoff, together with the Ambassadors of France

[1] *Turkey*, 3, 1876, No. 221.

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and Italy; M. de Bülow and Baron Jomini were also present at the interview. "After a few preliminary words from Prince Bismarck, Prince Gortchakoff and Count Andrassy confirmed the cordial understanding that exists between them, and expressed their sincere hope and anxious desire that the Governments of England, France and Italy, *who have given their moral support* to the attempted pacification of the Herzegovinians, will equally agree to support the further attempts they have now met to concert, in consequence of the alarming state of affairs in Turkey. Baron Jomini was then invited to read the enclosed document to us, and the proposal to which they solicit the co-operation of the Great Powers. . . . Prince Gortchakoff observed that he and Count Andrassy would remain till Monday (15th inst.) at Berlin, and that they hoped the Governments of England, France and Italy would be able to express an opinion on the telegraphic summary of their proposal, before they left."[1]

It is no part of the purport of this book to comment on the *procédés* of the "three Allied Powers" *vis-à-vis* of the other so-called Great Powers, England, France and Italy. That is a matter of their interior *ménage*. We are exclusively concerned with their conduct, severally and collectively, towards Turkey. If it were otherwise, one might have something to say concerning the strangeness and singularity of the proceeding among Great Powers, supposed to stand on a footing of equality, of three of their number convoking the rest to hear a document of the very highest international importance read to them for their assent to it, if possible by telegraph, within two days! But let us proceed with the narrative.

The document referred to, which goes in history by the name of the "Berlin Note," was a very curious document. It started with the declaration that "the alarming tidings which come from Turkey are of a nature to *impel the three Cabinets to draw closer their intimacy*. The three Imperial Courts have deemed themselves called upon to concert among themselves measures for averting the dangers of the situation, *with the concurrence* of the other great Christian Powers." After referring to the history of the question up to the Andrassy Memorandum, by which the Powers acquire a moral right and an obligation to insist on "pacification," and enumerating the causes that have prevented the success of that action, and especially the agitation caused by the prolongation of the strife in other parts of the Turkish Dominions, and laying stress on the deplorable events at Salonica, it declares that it is most essential to establish certain guarantees of a nature to insure beyond doubt the loyal and full application of the measures agreed upon between the Powers and the Porte."

As the first step in this direction, the three Imperial Courts

[1] *Turkey*, 3, 1875, No. 248.

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propose to insist with the Porte on a suspension of arms for two months, and to open negotiations between the Porte and the rebel delegates *on the basis of the wishes that the latter have formulated*, and which may be enumerated as follows:—

(1) That materials for the reconstruction of their houses should be provided the refugees by the Turkish Government.
(2) The appointment of a mixed commission to superintend reforms.
(3) The concentration of the Turkish troops on some points to be agreed upon.
(4) Christians and Mussulmans to retain their arms.
(5) The Consuls or Delegates of the Powers to keep a watch over the application of the reforms in general, and on the steps relative to the repatriation in particular.

And then the Note concludes: "If, however, the armistice were to expire without the efforts of the Powers being successful in attaining the end they have in view, the three Imperial Courts are of opinion that it would become necessary to supplement their diplomatic action by the sanction of an agreement with a view to such efficacious measures as might appear to be demanded in the interest of general peace, to check the evil and prevent its development."

It is not intended here to criticise at length these five heads, but one interesting and significant point must be noted. The Note says, in a passage *underlined* above, that these five heads were framed "on the basis of the wishes formulated by the Bosnian and Herzegovinian Delegates." Who were these Delegates? On the 27th May, the *Times* quoted an article from the *Nord* of April 1876, in which another Note was addressed by one Golub Babitch, in the name of the Bosnian insurgent chiefs, confirming full powers on one Gabriel Vasilitchki (a Russian subject who had made himself very busy in these matters) to treat on their behalf for peace on the basis of four points which were absolutely identical with four points of the Berlin Note.[1] Now, who was this Golub Babitch, who describes himself in this Note as "voivode," and who signs in the name and on the behalf of the "chief Bosnian chiefs"? Mr Consul Freeman, who was by no means prejudiced against the insurgents or in favour of the Turks, and knew his *monde* well, describes him. He was a "former brigand," now the chief of one of the principal bands, consisting of 3000 men, all well armed, that had invaded Bosnia.[2]

This, then, was the source of the inspiration of the five heads of the famous Berlin Note. It might certainly be more justly described in history as the "Golub Babitch Note." The five heads, however, seem to have been admirably adapted to secure the object

[1] *Turkey*, 3, 1876, Incl. No. 313. (Lord Odo Russell pronounces this document authentic. 3rd July 1876, No. 363.)

[2] *Ibid.*, 3, 1876, No. 185.

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perhaps intended, viz., to perpetrate and aggravate the bloodshed between the armed Mussulmans and the armed returning refugees, and so by "bleeding Turkey to death" to justify the action of the last and most important notice thrown in carelessly, and almost as an afterthought, and at the end of the Berlin Note, but which was, of course, the whole point of it, viz., that if the measures proposed did not produce their effect (or, let us add, produced the exactly opposite effect), "the three Imperial Courts would consider it necessary to supplement their diplomatic action by the sanction of an agreement," etc., etc. If ever there was a case of the sting being in the tail, it was in this "Berlin Note."

Lord Derby was not deceived either as to the intrinsic value, or worthlessness, of the four points which he politely but mercilessly dissected in an interview with Count Munster, the German Ambassador in London, on the 15th of May 1876,[1] nor was he intimidated by the "still closer intimacy of the three Imperial Courts," which the Note ostentatiously declared. France and Italy thought fit to adhere to it. The rejection of it by England made its rejection by Turkey doubly certain. It was certain in any event. The courteous but unshakeable resolution of the English Cabinet to have nothing to do with the Berlin Note, in spite of the "still closer intimacy of the three Imperial Courts," and the adherence of the other two Cabinets, brought the whole proposal down like a house of cards. But the allied quiver was not empty.

A stage, however, was reached in the Berlin Note which it is necessary to note carefully, as a new departure, involving a readjustment of compasses all round, became henceforth necessary.

We have seen the apparently unaccountable hurry that Austria was in to get matters in Bosnia and Herzegovina diplomatically settled to her satisfaction. The Consular intervention in August 1875, the Andrassy Note in December 1875, General Rodich's parley with the insurgents in April 1876, and the Berlin Memorandum on 15th May 1876, were the different stages of this pragmatical interference. The reason was clear. Austria was quite well aware, through her Intelligence Departments, that Russia was making superhuman, albeit unofficial, efforts to catch up the advance that Austria had secured for her operations in the Turkish provinces, and that every day made it less probable that the lead in the negotiations would be left in her hands.

We shall see that from this moment, *i.e.*, on the rejection of the Berlin Memorandum, Austria's precipitation no longer exists, and that she takes ample time to readjust her compass to the altered condition of things. The principal object of this Appendix being to describe the conduct and follow the policy of Austria in these matters, it is necessary to examine a little more closely the relations of Austria

[1] *Turkey*, 3, 1876, No. 259.

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with Montenegro, and the part played by this principality in this so-called rebellion.

It was generally taken for granted that Montenegro was completely and exclusively under Russian influence and protection, that it was a citadel and outpost of Russia in this part of the world, and that its prince moved in obedience to orders from St Petersburg alone. This belief, which assumed the character of an axiom in men's minds, served admirably the purpose of Austria in the general mystification with which it suited her to surround her policy at this time.

As the active and effective action of Montenegro in the insurrection was a secret to none in Europe, and as Russia exclusively pulled the strings which moved its prince, it was obvious that Russia was at the bottom of the Herzegovinian insurrection which Austria was doing all she could to assist the Porte in suppressing—*quod erat demonstrandum*. Now, there can be no doubt that Russia had for a very long time past preponderating influence in the Black Mountains, and that during the whole period that Austria followed what we have called her "normal policy" with respect to the Ottoman Empire, the influence of Russia over Montenegro was exclusive of any other followed in the nature of things; but Consul-General White, at any rate, knew better than to suppose that this meant that no steps had been taken by Austria (and the nature of the steps is evident) to acquire that influence over the prince that the "new policy" of Austria rendered desirable and necessary. In a despatch of the 25th of February 1876, Consul-General White, writing from Belgrade to Sir H. Elliot, says: "I beg to inform Your Excellency that I have been assured, from a source which I have hitherto found reliable, that the chief reason that has prompted Prince Milan to assume a bolder and quasi-martial attitude is the growing suspicion in his mind that a bait in the shape of an accession of territory was about to be offered by Austria on behalf of the Porte to the Prince of Montenegro. This opinion is strongly entertained here by persons *who are supposed to be well acquainted with the nature of the relations which have existed during the last two years between the Court of Vienna and that Prince.*"[1]

Not only did money pour into the principality, and arms, munitions and military science, as we shall presently see, were lavishly provided to these interesting mountaineers, but when the conditions of peace between Servia and Montenegro on one side, and the Porte on the other, came to be discussed (in the month of August 1876), Austria, who opposed the claim for any accession of territory to Servia, advocated a considerable extension for Montenegro. There can be slight doubt that this was one of the conditions of the bargain arranged "during the last two years between the Courts of Vienna and that Prince." It is, of course,

[1] *Turkey*, 3, 1876, No. 51, Incl.

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a noteworthy coincidence that the two years mentioned at the beginning of these intimate relations brings us exactly to the date when Count Andrassy became Chancellor of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

Mr Monson, the English political agent at Ragusa—afterwards sent on a special mission to Cettinje, and now H.B.M.'s Ambassador at Paris, who will certainly not be accused of prejudice against the Prince of Montenegro, by whom, on the contrary, he seems to have been quite fascinated, be it said in passing—in writing to Lord Derby from Ragusa, on the 14th June 1876, says: "The town of Ragusa, the capital of Dalmatia, is daily visited by armed insurgents who, at Vienna, are represented to be peaceful Dalmatians from the rural districts . . . or Montenegrins on their travels, whose costumes would be incomplete without the traditional carbines and poniards . . . During the period in which the export of munitions of war was suspended, *the contraband traffic was openly carried on at Ragusa and Meglina without hindrance; cases of dynamite were passed across the frontier, to be used for the destruction of the Turkish forts and blockhouses;* and it is alleged that certain *military stores* have been furnished to the insurgents at Grebgi by way of Ombla. . . . *The share taken by Austrian subjects in the late battles of the Douga Pass is notorious; it is now known that* 179 *Crevoscians were killed during the three days' fighting; but, as far as I am aware, no measures have been taken to prevent a repetition of such violations of neutrality.* . . . My own conviction is that had it not been for the money spent by Russia and by Dalmatian Panslavic Committees upon certain influential chiefs, *the insurrection would long since have collapsed.* . . . If these considerations are correct, as I honestly believe them to be, it is clear that, as far as the Herzegovina is concerned, a great step in the suppression of the insurrection would be effected *if the Austrian Government would dissolve the Panslavic Committees, enforce a strict surveillance of the frontier, and would absolutely forbid and put down the export of arms and ammunition to Montenegro.*"[1]

The facts stated in this important despatch need no addition, and would be only weakened by any commentary.

Let us proceed with others. Consul Holmes, writing from Bosna Serai, on the 15th June 1876, to Lord Derby, says: "On the 6th inst., the authorities at Mostar announced to the Baron Rodich (Governor of Dalmatia) the fact that 1800 cases of rifles and their cartridges were being landed at Cattaro for the Montenegrins. On the 9th, Baron Rodich thanked them for their information, and said he would order an enquiry into the matter and punish any illegality. Of course, the arms will all be at Cettinje before he commences. . . ."[2]

This is what Consul Holmes, who had resided fifteen years in the country, and who knew more of it than any foreigner alive (it was he

[1] *Turkey*, 3, 1876, No. 479. [2] *Ibid.*, 3, 1876, No. 491

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whom the English Government lent to Baron Calice at the Conference, on account of his special knowledge of the country, and who received the thanks of both Governments for his services), says: "To people residing in these countries, and who know the real state of parties, *and the true nature of the insurrection*, the idea of securing pacification by concessions to the insurgents appears simply absurd. In the first place, reforms and concessions cannot be executed until pacification is obtained, and in the next, for reasons which I have frequently explained to your Lordship, those who are in arms and who keep up the insurrection, *care nothing about them; they have other objects and other interests.*"[1]

Such was Austria, that was at peace with Turkey, entertaining friendly relations with the Porte, and protesting in every tone of diplomatic expressions to every Cabinet in Europe her earnest and anxious desire for the pacification of the Turkish Provinces!

[1] *Turkey*, 3, 1876, No. 491.

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APPENDIX C

BULGARIAN ATROCITIES

THE Slav Committees that had been for thirteen years "working up" the recalcitrant materials of rebellion in Bulgaria, were proceeding leisurely in their work when Count Andrassy stole a march upon them in the Herzegovina; but in spite of every effort on the part of Austria to precipitate a diplomatic crisis before the Bulgarian plot was ripe, the Slav Committees, whose venue was Bulgaria, caught him up before his work was completed. The head Slav Committee was at Moscow, and there were two central Committees at Kichenew and Bucharest. They had been established for about thirteen years, but although their activity had been intermittent, it was through their influence that the Bulgarian Church had been separated from the Greek Patriarchal, and that a Bulgarian School under Government patronage had been established at Odessa to form young Bulgarians into missionary propagandists of the Slav idea. When, however, the Herzegovina insurrection broke out, and matters were fast ripening on that side, a revival of energy at once manifested itself in the action of these Committees with reference to Bulgaria. As General Tchernagoff wrote in his paper, the *Russki Mir* (on $\frac{16}{28}$th May 1876): "I chose the route by way of Kischenew and the Danube, *along the whole course of which*, commencing from the Russian frontier to the Servian boundary, *Committees were formed towards the end of last year* for organising the plans of the Bulgarians in their approaching struggle for independence. Commencing from Bolgrad (a Bulgarian colony that fell away from Russia and became incorporated with Roumania by virtue of the Treaty of Paris), I everywhere heard the same thing, which was to the effect that all had been done that was possible by the people for the impending struggle. . . . The movements of the insurgents are regulated by a fixed programme."

We have seen (p. 43) during Midhat Pasha's Governorship of Bulgaria, how a raid over the frontier, following the usual tactics of exasperation, had endeavoured to excite a rising, which was promptly suppressed by the energy of the Vali. In the beginning of 1874 unrest began to show itself again in the districts of Trianova, Kezanlic, and Zagra, but, warned by the effects of neglect in a recent instance, the authorities had all the leaders of the movement arrested. Thereupon General Ignatieff made such energetic representations to the Porte, that orders arrived, not only for the release of the imprisoned,

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malcontents, but for the dismissal of all functionaries concerned in their arrest. The effect of this novel and original mode of dealing with an insurrection was soon apparent in the effervescence and excitement it caused among the Mussulman population throughout the Province. They saw rebel bands organising without disguise, and approaching their own hearths, the leaders of which were patronised by foreign consuls and supported by foreign embassies, whereas defensive measures on the part of their own natural leaders were discountenanced and punished.

It was in this frame of mind of the Mussulman population of the Empire, that the troubles both at Salonica and in Bulgaria occurred. In October 1875, a local rising took place in the village of Eski Zagra. Mr Vice-Consul Brophy writes to Sir H. Elliot:—"In October 1875 everything was settled for a rising in Bulgaria, in eight or ten places simultaneously. Something occurred which made it advisable that the rising should be put off, and messengers were sent to all the centres, but the "put off" for Eski Zagra arrived twenty-four hours late, and that town rose in the full conviction that it was being seconded by all the force of the insurgents. In fact, the *émeute*, revolt, rebellion, revolution, or whatever it was, of May last (1876) was to have come off in October 1875, but did not."[1]

The Committees were not ready. But the unrest continued, and when the Provincial Governors begged the Porte to send regular troops into the district, General Ignatieff dissuaded Mahmoud Nedim, the Grand Vizier, from doing so, on the ground that "the presence of regular troops would have the effect of still further increasing the excitement."

We will now allow Vice-Consul Dupuis, writing on 7th August 1876, to give an account to Lord Derby of the origin of the outbreak: "This was the condition of things when, on the 2nd of May, the insurrection organised and planned by the Revolutionary Committees, established during the last thirteen years in Bucharest and Moscow, suddenly exploded at Avrat Alan. The plan of operation of the revolutionists, assisted by the village priests and school-masters, was to destroy the railways and bridges throughout the vilayet, to set on fire Adrianople and Philippopolis, and to attack Tatar Bazardjik with 5000 men, and seize upon the Government stores there." An accident caused the premature explosion of the revolt. "A sergeant of Zaptiés, who had gone to Avrat Alan, either to collect taxes or to effect some arrests, was suddenly attacked by armed Bulgarians (who thought their plans had been betrayed), and had to fly for his life. Shortly after, troubles broke out at Otloukeuyi and Bellowa; at the same time, the inhabitants of several Bulgarian villages, it would appear, under the impression that the impending massacre was at hand, left their homes and fled to Otloukeuyi and Avrat Alan.

[1] *Turkey*, 1, 1877, No. 674 Incl.

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The alarm then appears to have become general. The Christians were afraid that they would be massacred by the Mussulmans, while the latter were afraid that they were going to be exterminated by the Christians. The numerical strength of the insurgents was stated to be 15,000. The Mutassarifat of Philippopolis was at that time a Tatar Bazardjik. Troops were telegraphed for to the Governor-General of Adrianople, who, it is said, replied that *as he had no military force at his disposal*, he thought the best plan would be to raise irregulars. On the 4th May, a meeting of some notables at Philippopolis was held, under the presidency of the Mollah, when the recommendation of the Governor-General, for raising Nefer Ami (public soldiers) was approved of, and a decision to that effect was signed and forwarded to Adrianople. Orders were then immediately sent to different parts of the vilayet for enlisting irregulars or Bashi-bazouks."[1] These Bashi-bazouks attacked Peroushtitza Batak and Klissoura and Otloukeuyi, and there is no doubt that very great excesses were committed by them. But Mr Dupuis goes on to say: "It is said, without any attempt at concealment, that the Russian Vice-Consul in Philippopolis is solely responsible for the sad disasters which have befallen Peroushtitza. In many instances, too, the villages were set on fire by the Bulgarians themselves in order to compel their inhabitants to take up arms. The village of Singerli, now a complete mass of ruins, was in the first instance set on fire by a priest. This man, in order to force the people to rise against the Government, rushed about the place, knife in hand, telling them that their hour of deliverance had arrived, and that Russian soldiers were at hand to aid them against the Turks. I am assured, on reliable and independent authority, that the Bulgarian insurrection was carefully and skilfully planned by men possessing knowledge and experience in military tactics from foreign parts. Had their plans succeeded, and if the Bulgarians had got the upper hand of the Turks, there is little doubt the existence of Turkey in Europe would have been endangered, and the Bulgarians would have committed far greater excesses than are laid to the charge of the Mussulmans, from the fact that the former had, from the commencement of the disturbance, *killed every Turk they came across, regardless as to age or sex, and by the practising upon them, in several instances, of unspeakable atrocities.* Atrocities have, undoubtedly, been committed by the Bulgarians as well as by the Turks. Thus at Carlowo, it was related to me, on good authority, that a Turkish boy had both his arms flayed to the elbows by the Bulgarians; while at Otloukeuyi, the Bulgarians massacred eighty Mussulmans, and cut up a child into pieces, and publicly offered the flesh for sale, and committed other unspeakable atrocities on females."[2]

As for the Russian Vice-Consul at Philippopolis, Mr Gueroff,

[1] *Turkey*, 3, 1877, No. 57 Incl. [2] *Ibid.*

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Vice-Consul Dupuis says of him: "The news of the Russian Vice-Consul at Philippopolis having been insulted, though repeated, is not generally confirmed. Some say, if he was not insulted, he is trying his best to provoke it by his conduct."[1]

Sir H. Elliot, on 11th August, writes to Lord Derby: "A letter from Mr Baring, received yesterday, contains these words: 'There is not the slightest doubt that the Russian Consul at Philippopolis had a leading part in creating the late insurrection.'"[2]

As to the menacing character of the insurrection, there is cumulative evidence to that effect. On 13th May, Vice-Consul Brophy, writing to Sir H. Elliot, says: "I have the honour to express to your Excellency my belief that the Bulgarian insurrectionary movement, commenced in the Caza of Philippopolis, will not be confined to that district. I have some reason for thinking that the plans of the insurgents embrace six centres of revolt, most of them in the high Balkan (Kodga Balkan, Stari Planina), in each of which localities depôts of arms—rifles, revolvers, etc.—ammunition, and provisions are hidden."[3]

The cruelties practised by the insurgents on the Turks were also beyond all doubt. They were, moreover, in strict conformity with the practice and instructions of the insurgents in all similar risings. On 12th May, Mr Dupuis informs Sir H. Elliot: "The burning of Bellowa seems to have been attended with horrible cruelties to the small Turkish guard in charge of the place, which, being overpowered, was hacked to pieces by the Bulgarians. My informant adds that, shortly after this occurrence, a party of about a hundred and fifty well-mounted and equipped insurgents, led by the priests, presented itself in the village, declaring, with crucifixes in hand, that that was the way to exterminate Islamism."[4] Mr Sandison, the first dragoman of the English Embassy, writing to Sir H. Elliot on 11th July 1876, says, *à propos* of these cruelties: "I may here quote the testimony of the artist employed by the *Illustrated London News*, who in his travels through Bulgaria came across the body of a Turk who had been impaled and roasted by Bulgarians. Such acts could not but lead to reprisals, and to the consequent destruction of many thousand lives, as well as of a large number of villages, amongst which must also be included a good many Mussulman ones."[5] Consul Reade reports from Rustchuk on 19th July (1876) that 'Some Bulgarian insurgents one day seized two Mussulman women, whose breasts they cut off *and then put* them to death."[6]

Vice-Consul Calvert, writing from Philippopolis on 29th August 1876, says: "The Christian Commissioners, one of whom, Yovantcho Effendi, is himself a Bulgarian, state themselves to be satisfied that deeds of great atrocity on the part of the insurgents marked the

[1] *Turkey*, 3, 1876, No. 343, Incl.
[2] *Ibid.*, 1, 1877, No. 24.
[3] *Ibid.*, 3, 1876, Incl. 4 in 289.
[4] *Ibid.*, 3, 1876, No. 289, Incl.
[5] *Ibid.*, 5, 1876, Incl. 1 in No. 18.
[6] *Ibid.*, 5, 1876, Incl. 2 in No. 21.

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commencement of the rising in May last, and that *cruelties were designedly committed by the insurgents as being the means best calculated to bring on a general revolution in Bulgaria*, by rendering the situation of the Christians, however peaceably inclined, so intolerable under the indiscriminate retaliation which the governing race was sure to attempt, as to force them in self-defence to rise. Among other instances of this Blacque Bey mentioned to me that the Christian inhabitants of a village near Tirnovo related to him, how, at the beginning of the revolt, the insurgents had seized a wealthy Turk of the locality, beloved by Christians and Moslems alike, for his justice and benevolence, had buried him up to the waist in the earth, and then stoned him to death."[1]

With reference to the invariable mode of procedure of the leaders of the insurrection for the very purpose of exciting reprisals, Sir H. Elliot, in a communication to Lord Derby, says: "The inhabitants of another village stated that at the beginning of the insurrection, they were told by *the priests and the schoolmasters* that the Turks were advancing, that they must leave this village or they would be killed by the Turks, and that those who objected were driven out by force. The Mussulmans who happened to be there were murdered; their number was differently estimated at twelve and thirty-two; the village was then set on fire. The Mussulmans in the neighbourhood seeing part of the village in flames, went there and pillaged and burnt the remaining houses."[2] The revolutionary agents from the Slav Committees had, since the recrudescence of their activity in the winter, been working zealously among the Bulgarians. On 4th May Sir H. Elliot, in acquainting Lord Derby with the movement at Otloukeuyi, says: "It was known that revolutionary agents were working actively among the Bulgarians, and that arms and ammunition have latterly been introduced in considerable quantities."[3] They knew, too, pretty well what they were about and when to strike, so that reprisals could be most surely counted on. Consul Reade, from Rustchuk, informs (9th May) Sir H. Elliot: "I have also just heard of an event said to have occurred near Avrat Alan, which, if true, may bring on serious complications. It is said that a Circassian village in that vicinity has been burnt; if so, the Circassians, generally a lawless set, are sure to take their revenge, and this may severely tax the Government to put down, when once commenced."[4] Prophetic words indeed! The revolutionary agents of the Committees found this work difficult in the face of the repressive measures taken. On the 16th May 1876 Consul Reade reports from Rustchuk: "Many of the revolutionary Bulgarians in Wallachia are said to be entering this vilayet, and some have already been discovered and arrested."[5] Here, then, we have revolutionary agents coming from abroad and exciting the

[1] *Turkey*, 1, 1877, Incl. in No. 222.
[2] *Ibid.*, 5, 1876, No. 22.
[3] *Ibid.*, 3, 1876, No. 252.
[4] *Ibid.*, 3, 1876, No. 273, Incl.
[5] *Ibid.*, 3, 1876, No. 315, Incl.

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people already long worked upon by priests and schoolmasters brought up in Russia, to rise in rebellion and to commit every species of atrocity on the Mussulman population with the direct object of provoking them to reprisals, which could be exploited against them all over Europe. We have further the Consul of a friendly Power, one of the chief leaders of the insurrection, and the "Ambassador of the same friendly Power" at Constantinople, strongly counselling against the despatch of regular troops to districts where the Governor-General urges the necessity of their presence, and when the Mussulman inhabitants, in their defence and under the impulse of panic and exaggerated fear of what was going to happen, without any regular force to protect them, arm irregular bands from any quarter they can procure them with, likely enough, not sufficient discrimination and examination as to their character, scenes are, no doubt, enacted, and atrocities committed, which every human being, be he Christian or Mahometan, would in cold blood deprecate and deplore.

As Sir H. Elliot says: "An insurrection or civil war is everywhere accompanied by cruelties and abominable excesses, and this being tenfold the case in Oriental countries where people are divided into antagonistic creeds and races, the responsibility and sin of those who incite a peaceful province to rise becomes doubly heavy, and they now endeavour to throw them upon others."[1] Nobody outside Timbuctoo approves or condones cruelties, but the charge against the Ottoman authorities really amounts to their arming and employing irregular troops, Pomaks, Circassians, Gipsies, etc., over whom they could exercise very imperfect control. But as Mehemet Rushdi Pasha told the English Ambassador, "the emergency was so great as to render it indispensable at once to stamp the movement out by any means that were immediately available."[2] Mehemet Rushdi himself, it will be remembered, only came into office after those acts had been committed. He was consequently in no way responsible, neither he nor Midhat, either for their commission or for the events that led up to them.

With reference to the *Daily News* article on Turkish atrocities, which started the agitation against Turkey in England, Sir H. Elliot, writing on the 25th July 1876, says: "I have reason to believe that the credulity of the correspondent of the *Daily News*, whose letters on the subject of the Bulgarian atrocities attracted so much attention in England, has been imposed upon by two Bulgarian relatives of one of the presumed ringleaders of the revolt, inhabiting Philippopolis. One of these was for a time editor of a Bulgarian journal in Constantinople, and it is evident that information derived from such a source can only be regarded as untrustworthy."[3]

As the very aim and purpose of the insurrection was to create excitement and provoke hatred of the Turk in Europe, it is no wonder if the most monstrous exaggerations passed current as peremptory truths.

[1] *Turkey*, 1, 1877, No. 221. [2] *Ibid.*, 3, 1876, No 513.
[3] *Ibid.*, 5, 1876, No. 24.

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Sir H. Elliot, writing on 6th July, says: "The excesses committed in the suppression of the insurrection have unquestionably been very great, as was inevitable from the nature of the force which the Porte was, in the first emergency, obliged to employ, but it is equally certain that the details which have been given, coming almost exclusively from Russian and Bulgarian sources, are so *monstrously exaggerated* as to deprive them of much claim to much attention. Cases of revolting cruelty have been mentioned to me in such a circumstantial manner as to make it almost impossible to doubt this truth, but which proved, on investigation, to be entirely fictitious. . . . Turkish ministers deny that the cruelties have been on a scale at all approaching to what they are represented; they point out that the horrors committed on Turkish women and children are passed over in silence, and they plead that they had no alternative *but* to use the irregular force at their disposal to put down an unprovoked insurrection fomented from abroad, the authors of which are responsible for the sufferings which have been entailed upon both Christians and Mahometans."[1]

Some of the fictions invented were quite picturesque and dramatic. These fictions and legends were not confined to Bulgaria, and Canon Liddon and a Rev. Mr MacColl carried off the palm for ingenious credulity. On the 2nd October 1876, Sir H. Elliot telegraphs to Her Majesty's Consul at Bosnia Serai: "Canon Liddon and a friend, who went to Servia by the Bosnian frontier, state that they saw examples of revolting cruelties practised by Turkish officers of the regular army, who have *impaled*, at all military stations along the frontier, men and women. Report as to truth of these statements." On the 5th inst. the startled Consul sends the following reply: "Everything known here would make statement in your telegram of 2nd inst. perfectly incredible, *but* for the name of your Excellency's informant. I will write of this by next post."[2] The statement of the distinguished ecclesiastic created a great sensation. It turned out, however, that he had obtained his information from passengers in a steam vessel on the Save, and that they had not travelled along the frontier at all, as Sir A. Buchanan, who first reported to Sir H. Elliot, had been led to believe. "The whole story, therefore," adds Sir A. Buchanan, "probably resolves itself, as suggested by Mr Holmes, to heads or even bodies having been exposed on poles, as I have myself seen hanging in chains during the British Protectorate of Corfu."[3] Mr Holmes, in his report, after demonstrating the absurdity of the story, politely adds: "Now, if Canon Liddon states that he saw what he describes, of course I can say nothing to the contrary; but if he has only been assured of these atrocities, it is most certain that he has been grossly deceived, with a view to make use of his voice and influence as a means of increasing and confirming public opinion in England, in

[1] *Turkey*, 3, 1876, No. 538. [2] *Ibid.*, 1, 1877, No. 539.
[3] *Ibid.*, 686.

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the belief of the barbarous conduct attributed to the Turks, and in hostility to them."[1] These reverend gentlemen had evidently been the victims of, as Mr Holmes further says, "a monstrous joke," and he proceeds to explain the matter. "After much reflection, however, the matter is, I think, as clear as possible. Near most Bosnian farm-houses there are stakes, such as Mr MacColl describes, around which the haricot beans . . . are fixed up to dry with something above them to keep off the birds. . . . At the time of Mr MacColl's voyage down the Save, it is probable that most of the beans had been garnered, but a portion might have been left on one of the stakes which attracted his attention. This, on being pointed out to some practical joker amongst the officers of the steamboat, with its accidental likeness to a body, together, perhaps, with the previous conversation of the travellers, suggested the hoax, which, on seeing that it was seriously accepted, was kept up till the end of the journey."[2]

Another and most probable explanation of this astounding story was that what Canon Liddon and his friend really saw, "was a watchman who had mounted on his stake, probably to look at the steamer descending the Save."[3] Anybody may be mistaken, even distinguished ecclesiastics; but what, in such quasi-sacred persons was scarcely to be expected, was the tenacity with which they stuck to the impalement theory, after it was exploded in the minds of all impartial persons. Even high dignitaries of the Church don't like being laughed at.

[1] *Turkey*, Incl. in No. 687. [2] *Ibid.*, Incl. in No. 961.
[3] *Ibid.*, 2, 1877, Incl. in No. 179.

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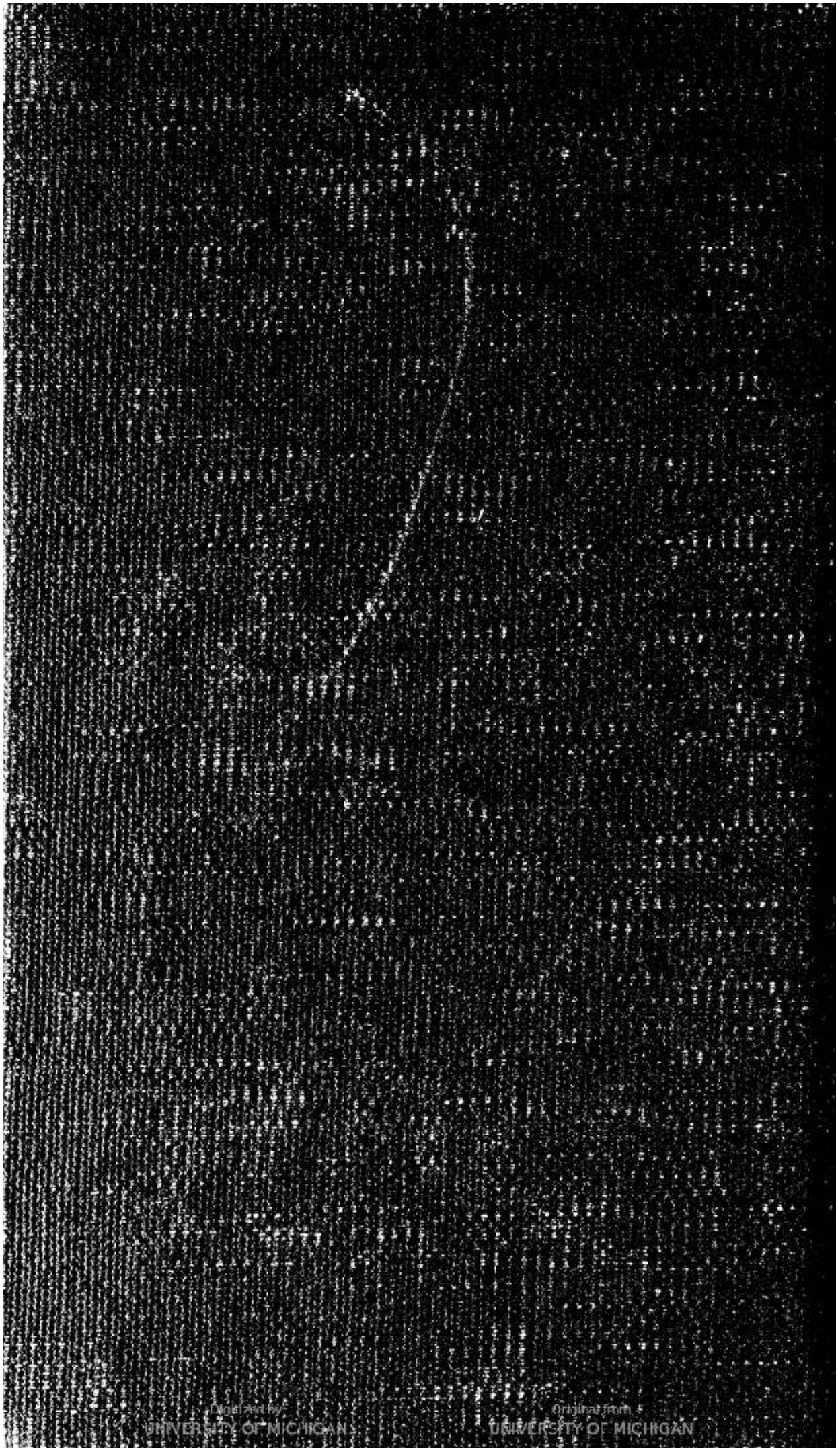
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